

UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS IN PRAGUE
FACULTY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



International Marketing

**Communication Strategy as a component
of Silvio Berlusconi's political marketing**

Master Thesis

Author: Nicoll Marucciová

Supervisor: Ing. Květa Olšanová, Ph.D.

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Declaration:

Herewith I declare that I have written the Master's Thesis on my own and I have cited all sources.

In Prague, 7th December 2017

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Signature

Acknowledgement:

Foremost, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Ing. Květa Olšánová, Ph.D. for her continuous assistance, her responsiveness and many valued advices in the process of writing this master thesis. Additionally, I would like to thank my mom, my dad and Alessandro for their constant support.

Title:

Communication Strategy as a component of Silvio Berlusconi's political marketing

Abstract:

This master thesis is investigating the successful components of a political communication strategy with the application of the case of Silvio Berlusconi. The main objective is to research, analyze and investigate what are the main factors of success of Berlusconi's political communication within the framework of political marketing. The analysis is based on publications and bibliography found while examining the three chosen indicators, that were determined as key elements in political communication, following the models of political marketing. Lastly, the thesis draws a parallel between the communication styles of S. Berlusconi and Donald J. Trump.

Key words:

Silvio Berlusconi, Political marketing, Political communication, Communication strategies, Donald Trump

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List of abbreviations

AMA - American Marketing Association

AN – Alleanza Nazionale

DMA – Direct Marketing Association

FI – Forza Italia

MOP – Market oriented party

PDS – Partito Democratico della Sinistra

POP – Product oriented party

PPI – Partito Popolare

SOP – Sales oriented party

Introduction

Very little people would disagree on the fact that Silvio Berlusconi has been one of the major key player in the entire history of politics of the Italian Republic. Despite of how controversial his figure has always been, there is no doubt on the importance that his role has played in the political scenario since its first political appearance in 1994. As G. Mazzoleni reported, *"It is commonly assumed that Berlusconi transformed the scenario of Italian politics by applying the techniques of political marketing to an electoral campaign in a systematic way for the first time."*¹

Several are the reasons underlying Berlusconi's transformation from a powerful businessman to the above-mentioned shaper of the Italian politics, and all, are intrinsically interconnected one to another. Amongst many, Berlusconi's ability to incisively talk to the people through well studied communication strategies is accounted as one of the major reasons that lead to his victories, one after the other, over the course of almost three decades.

Various studies have tried over the past years to understand what were the reasons that made Berlusconi's campaigns so successful, and still nowadays, 25 years after his first glorious victory, flows of words are being written in order to replicate his result. According to me, this case is one of the most interesting in the field of political marketing, of which this thesis is all about.

The objective of this master thesis is to research, analyze and investigate what are the main factors of success of Berlusconi's political communication within political marketing. This objective will be accomplished by firstly giving a theoretical framework on political marketing, and political communication. Then, using the models of political marketing (namely Newman's political marketing model) will help to understand the three most important and relevant elements that will be taken into consideration to answer the main research question 'What are the components of a successful communication strategy (in the case of Silvio Berlusconi)?' Another interesting and crucial question, which triggered a huge debate that lasted for years, is whether Silvio Berlusconi's success relies on his application of a marketing approach in his political communication behavior. This matter will be addressed by analyzing Berlusconi's campaigning style and the use he made (or made not) of political marketing tools. I believe the

¹ Campus, Donatella. "Mediatization and Personalization of Politics in Italy and France: The Cases of Berlusconi and Sarkozy." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 15, no. 2 (2010), p. 226.

answer to Berlusconi's success might be in his ability to introduce marketing into politics. Therefore, to analyze this further, I decided to introduce three components of political campaigning, which are generally recognized as fundamental, and use them as indicator to determine whether they can answer to the above-mentioned questions. The last step, which might or not sustain the three indicators chosen from the model, will be drawing a parallel between Berlusconi and Trump.

The analysis will follow a top-down approach; firstly, two main models of political marketing will be taken into account, the Lees-Marshment model and the Newman model of political marketing. These two models are fundamental for the comprehension of political marketing as such, and will be the base for understanding what political marketing is, what tools are used in political marketing, how they are used and what are the key players in this field. The sources taken into consideration to support the theory, but also the whole analysis, come mostly from American literature, where the political marketing made its entrance first. Afterwards communication components will be explained for further comprehension of the case analysis. Subsequently, there will be a background chapter of the situation that was happening in the socio-political sphere and economic situation of Berlusconi himself, which gives an overview to understand the reasons behind his candidacy into politics. Literature used from the third chapter onwards comes mostly from Italian publications, in paper and online. The analysis of the three chosen indicators will be the application of the theoretical part of this thesis onto the case. The case of Berlusconi will be put into context with references to the first two chapters, the political marketing and communication theory. In the last chapter, the author will be trying to connect the two personas of Berlusconi and Trump to find similarities in light of the chosen indicators, which will test the indicators in answering the main research question.

The first part of the thesis will introduce the theoretical framework to political marketing and political communication, that will be afterwards used to apply the case to the models presented in the first chapter. Berlusconi's first entrance in politics, in January 1994, will be analyzed related to this theory. The two above mentioned models will be presented, and the usage of tools will be explained. The second chapter already looks at specifics of political communication. Two of them will be elaborated: branding in politics and the political language.

The second part of the thesis, after taking into consideration the con-causes that aid to his victories, will describe the elements that made Berlusconi's communication strategy a great success, in light of the previously discussed theories. The framework taken into consideration

is the political life of Silvio Berlusconi, beginning with him running for Italian Prime Minister office in 1994, until the pre-electoral period of the elections 2018. In these sections, I will apply the three indicators, which arise as the most relevant in the first part, to Berlusconi's strategy, in order to find the answers to the two research questions.

The figure of Silvio Berlusconi has sincerely changed not only the Italian political arena, but influences of his political strategies can be found all around the globe. As last part of my dissertation, I would like to focus the attention to a parallel that comes rather natural if we think of personalities that might have the same style that Berlusconi had. I believe it is possible to draw a connecting line between the figure of Silvio Berlusconi and the recently elected president of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump. Even though this could be the subject of a vast analysis by itself, there are several common elements between the political strategies of each of these two successful businessmen that became also successful politicians. In this chapter, I will apply the three indicators *brand, language and media* to D. Trump's campaign and highlight the common elements just mentioned and compare them with Berlusconi's ones.

1. Political marketing

Marketing, according to its definition, “is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large.”² It is set to take care of the (potential) customer and provide him with whatever exactly he needs. For example, there is so many types of toothpastes, some branded, some less branded, with different prices, different quality, in many different styles and packaging. Marketers, after a series of analyses and researches will know, what the customer of the exact brand wants and stands for. Therefore, an insight is going to help the marketers to connect with their customers and make people going to a supermarket buy their toothpaste. Today, in a world where marketing connects with all of the people in the world on daily basis, the relationship between politics and marketing is no wonder.

Media are connecting with our lives every day, they have the power, and steadily they give us incentives to change our minds. It does not matter if we are talking about the newspaper we read in our lunch break at work, the TV news we watch in the evening on the couch, or the social media we constantly check on our smart phones. Media are everywhere around us, and communication is the key to a successful campaign.

Political marketing is “marketing designed to influence target audiences to vote for a particular person, party, or proposition.”³ Lilleker says, it “refers to the use of marketing tools, concepts and philosophies within the field of policy development, campaigning and internal relations by political parties and organizations. It is seen as a reaction to the rise of political consumerism, and the collapse of partisanship, in western democratic societies as well as emergent democracies.”⁴ It is based on the application of classic marketing methods and exploring the political system with the use of economic theories. Presidents and prime ministers; politicians and parties; government departments and councils, they all use marketing in their pursuit of political goals.⁵ These goals can be winning an election, have support from the electors when they have already won, or having their

² According to the American Marketing Association (AMA)

³ According to the AMA

⁴ Lilleker, Darren G. *Key concepts in political communication*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2011, p. 151.

⁵ Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p. 1.

policies backed. Its functions are many. By doing a market research, these parties can understand, who are their voters, who is keen to listen to what they have to say, who will be touched by it or who is undecided. Effective marketing must put parties and candidates in a position not only to sell the product, but to establish a long-term relationship by listening to the needs of voter-citizens. The contemporary political systems are mostly multi-party polarized, especially in the European countries, so there is a big offer of parties, which makes it hard for one specific to win. That is the reason why a good communication strategy is the key to a successful campaign. Another issue is that with all the information given, people are not long-term driven and easily forget. Therefore, the communication has to be continual, systematic and compelling. "According to the concept of Steinberg, political marketing includes the following processes:

- Using marketing research to understand the political environment and understanding the behavior of political competitors and citizens;
- Successfully offers a "product" to a potential "consumer";
- Applies various marketing strategies to "sell" political offerings;
- Penetrates the political market through mass media.”⁶

In the following chapter, I will take into consideration the theoretical framework related to political marketing, what it is and how it is used in the field of politics. Two major models of political marketing, the Lees-Marshment model and the Newman's one will serve as theoretical background for the analysis of the political strategy of first Silvio Berlusconi, and later on Donald J. Trump. The aim is to identify general patterns of the marketing process that are applied frequently by politicians to gain votes and remain in office. These patterns, or tools, are crucial in nowadays politics but fall under the umbrella of marketing communication.

1.1. Political marketing models

The first mentioning marketing benefit in politics, were the fathers of modern marketing, Kotler and Levy, saying that “marketing is that function of the organization that can keep in constant touch with the organization's consumers, read their needs,

⁶ Jablonski, A. *Politický marketing: úvod do teorie a praxe*. Brno: Barrister & Principal, 2006, p. 25.

develop "products" that meet these needs, and build a program of communications to express the organization's purposes"⁷. The radio in the twenties made a big impact on political campaigning, and it was the first media to reach masses. In the sixties, the television brings a new era of political marketing, and finally increases the importance of different features in a candidate, like the leadership capabilities, his look, charisma, the performance he would give in front of the people, among others. A major innovative instrument will be the television and the use a candidate would make of it, especially because it would reach a greater public than ever before. In light of these facts, the candidates start to understand the need for communication experts to run their campaigns, like agencies, consultants and PR. As the technology is growing, the ways of doing politics is too. Nowadays, with new instruments like the internet and social media, politics has change radically, and new and multiple approaches came to life. There are many definitions of political marketing out there and there is truth in every one of them. There are also several models explaining the matter, I will present here the two that I believe are most relevant and complete models found in literature: Lees-Marshment model and Newman's model of political marketing.

Lees-Marshment model

One of the two models that will be described is the model of a British Politologist Jennifer Lees-Marshment who analyzed the behavior of the Labour party in the years 1983, 1987 and 1997. Lees-Marshment understands political marketing as defining a way to interact with the electorate. The main point of this model is the relationship between the candidate and the voter. She divided this model into three parts, into three marketing approaches of a party:

- Market oriented party (MOP)
- Sales oriented party (SOP)
- Product oriented party (POP)

“The basic essence of a MOP is one that will use various tools to understand and then respond to voter demands, but in a way, that integrates the need to attend to

⁷ Kotler, Philip, and Sidney J. Levy. "Broadening the Concept of Marketing." *Journal of Marketing*, vol. 33, no. 1, 1969, p. 15.

members' needs, ideas from politicians and experts and the realities of governing.”⁸ MOP is the youngest and the most modern of the three parties. It conducts market intelligence to find the market demand, and then it designs a product for the election result to be as big as possible. After that, a communication strategy is developed, and the campaign is made to achieve the long-term accomplishment.

SOP is a kind of pull marketing strategy party. It is trying to pull the electors to vote for them because “they aim to sell what they decide is best for the people, utilizing effective political marketing communication techniques.”⁹ SOP is trying to deliver the message in a way that would attract the most electors as possible. There is seen a similarity with the pull strategy because of the party using many communication ways to appeal to their audience.

POP is the traditional party with conservative behavior. It is based on its ideas and ideals, which are hardly changed by the party through the time. “It assumes that voters will realize that its ideals are the right ones and therefore vote for it.”¹⁰ This approach includes little amount of parties, many of these are extremists. In contemporary politics, this concept is used to defend the elite-driven beliefs, in that case the electors want to vote for the value or merit without the need of using any communication means.

⁸ Lees-Marshment, Jennifer., Jesper. Strömbäck a Chris. Rudd. *Global political marketing*. New York: Routledge, 2010, p. 4.

⁹ Ivi, p. 9

¹⁰ Ibidem

Table 1: Defining characteristics of product-, sales- and market-oriented parties

	<i>Product-oriented party</i>	<i>Sales-oriented party</i>	<i>Market-oriented party</i>
Defining characteristic	Argues for its own ideas and policies; assumes that voters will realize that its ideas are the best and therefore vote for it.	Believes in its own ideas and policies, but realizes that they must be ‘sold’ to the public; does not change its behavior or policies to give people what they want, but tries to make people want what the party offers.	Uses market intelligence to identify voter needs and demands, and designs its policies, candidates and behavior to provide voter satisfaction; does not try to change what people want, but give people what they want.
If the party does not succeed in elections	Believes that the voters just do not realize that the party’s policies are the best ones; refuses to change policies.	Tries to make better use of market intelligence and persuasion techniques, i.e., become more professionalized in its campaigning.	Uses market intelligence to re-design the product, so that it becomes better suited to the wants and needs of targeted people.

Source: Lees-Marshment, Jennifer., Jesper. Strömbäck a Chris. Rudd. Global political marketing. New York: Routledge, 2010, p.18. ISBN 0-203-86933-8.

Bruce I. Newman model

“Today, similar to the business world, it takes a good marketing researcher, media strategist, and direct mail specialist, as well as a stable of consultants and a lot of money, to win in politics.”¹¹

This subchapter will be dedicated to understanding Newman’s model of political marketing. The first book written about this topic was published in 1994, after analyzing Bill Clinton’s presidential campaign. He divides the model into two parts: the marketing campaign and the political campaign. Marketing campaign includes market (voter) segmentation, candidate positioning, and strategy formulation and implementation.

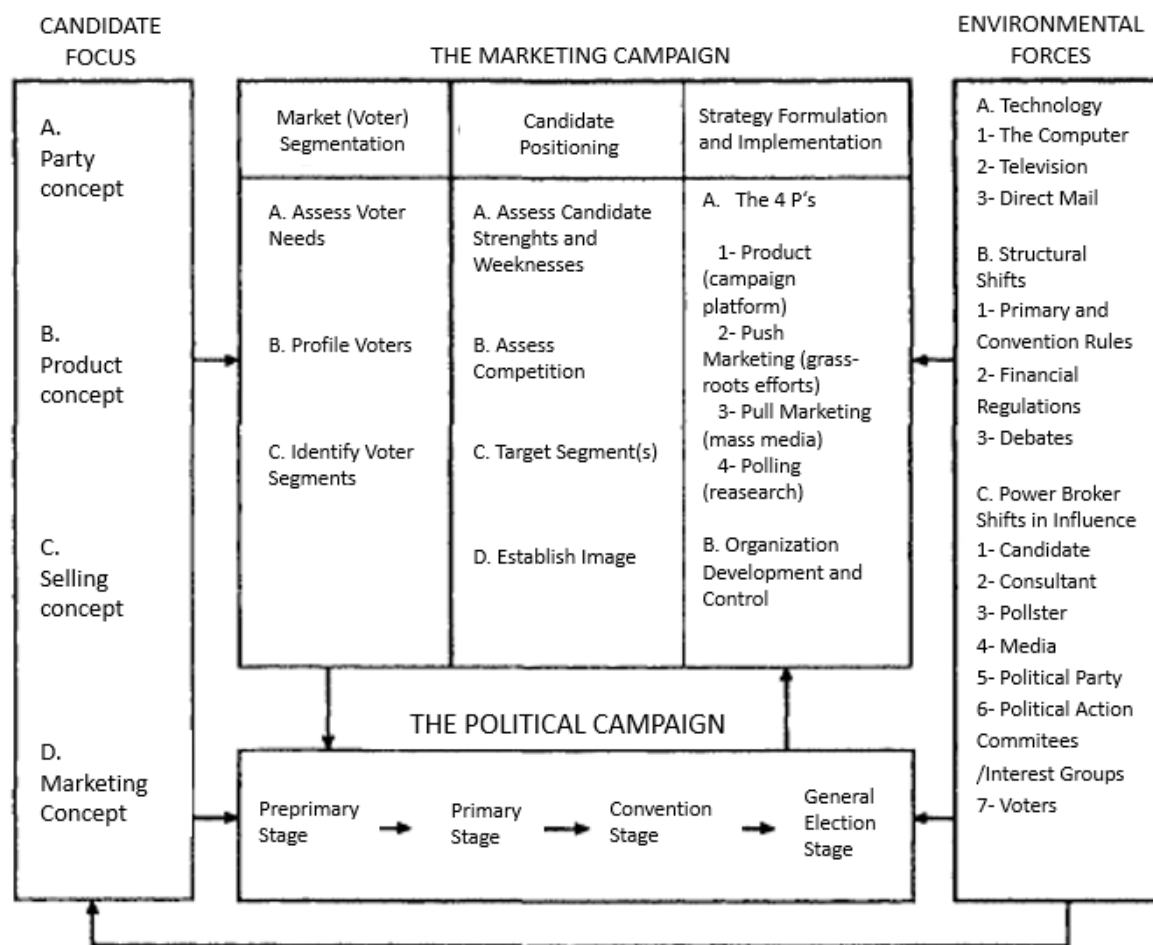
Once the candidate's position is established, a marketing strategy is developed and implemented, Newman talks about the “4P” components that are used to reinforce the chosen position of the candidate¹²: **Product, Push marketing, Pull marketing and Polling**. Product in this case is the campaign platform. Push marketing is the platform

¹¹ Newman, Bruce I. *The mass marketing of politics: democracy in an age of manufactured images*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, c1999.

¹² Newman, Bruce I. *The Marketing of the President. Political Marketing as Campaign Strategy*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994, p. 13.

how the message is going to be communicated. In this stage is very important that the candidate's network of workers and volunteers understand the purpose and the insight the candidate wants to deliver to the voters. Pull marketing concentrates the attention on mass media to finally reach the voters; and polling, the research used in politics to get the fundamental feedback to build the marketing campaign. The following figure shows the complete model:

Figure 1: Newman's Model of Political Marketing



Source: Newman, Bruce I. *The Marketing of the President. Political Marketing as Campaign Strategy*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994, p.12. ISBN 0-8039-5138-8.

“Political marketing, the making of successful candidates”¹³ Philip and Neil Kotler describe how much the industry of political marketing grew over the last 30 years. After the “Marketing of the President”, Newman published “The Handbook of Political

¹³ Newman, Bruce I. *Handbook of political marketing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1999, p. 3.

Marketing” which could be taken as a manual for campaign specialists and political consultants.

1.2. Political marketing tools

Politics have radically changed during the course of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st. Since the spreading of democracies among the western countries, and the universal suffrage taking over, politicians’ attention has shifted as their electoral base shifted. If earlier in the process, their attention was focused on the specific sectors that were eligible for voting (namely white rich man at the beginning of the 1900) with the increase of political rights their attention had to move to the populous, the people as an entity. For this reason, in the last decades, much attention is given to the study of the electoral base, and politicians need to know as much as possible about the voters, in order to create targeted successful campaigns. In order to achieve the goal, there are different marketing tools, among which I will analyze segmentation, targeting and positioning. These will later help develop a strategy and a plan for the campaign.

Segmentation

Segmentation is the marketing’s basic tool to understand the customer. As well in politics, we want to understand who could be our voters and at whom should we aim at. Therefore, segmentation is the result of all the previously made analysis and research carried out. It is a compulsory step for a concrete political action. In addition, a high-quality market segmentation is an essential part of the preparation of a political campaign, and makes use of other marketing tools. Finally, it composes the electorate into groups that have the same characteristics within them, so once the most suitable segments are identified to an eventual positioning, the focus is put on them. Voters in the selected segments should be attracted the offer that takes into consideration their expectations, and should then create a loyal relationship with the party or candidate. That is why it is necessary to focus on the segments, which are keen to accept the party’s values and programs.

To identify our segments, we use following criteria¹⁴:

- **Geographical** factors are taken into account here because we need to localize our customer. The market can be split into rural, suburban and urban areas or we can be looking at cities, regions or countries.
- **Demographical** criteria that analyses aspects like sex, age, education, profession, income, family size and many others. Today, more than ever, we can see the differences between the young and older population in political thinking when it comes to populism for example, as there is contrast in judgement within women and men.
- **Socio-economic** factors include income, obtained education or household expenses, have their role when it comes to the policies presented; high-income people are more likely to be concerned about taxes, and low-income people more about social policies of each candidate's program.
- **Psychographic** factors. In this criterion, we can divide the voters into liberal and progressive ones. Still, we also consider their hobbies, values or lifestyle.
- **Political** factors; the electors probably already have an opinion on politics. Somehow, there is a certain degree of interest and participation, expectations and opinions and those often cannot be changed.
- **Cultural** factors are important, as culturally mature people will be more interested in policies regarding culture, economy and policies regarding different social issues.
- **Religious** criteria are regarded especially in countries where religion is practiced on everyday basis (in Italy catholic Christians).
- **Sympathy towards a candidate** is the last factor I am going to mention. This candidate must be well known, and the electors must somehow feel close to him and to his ideals.

Targeting

“Target marketing is the decision to distinguish the different groups that make up a market and to develop appropriate product and marketing mixes for each target market. The key step in target marketing is market segmentation, which is the act of dividing

¹⁴ Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p. 72.

a market into distinct and meaningful groups of buyers who might merit separate products and or marketing mixes. Market segmentation is a creative act.”¹⁵

It means evaluating which segments are relevant to us and we will be aiming at with our further developed strategies. The selection itself is based on different criteria. The basic one would be, how much are the voters attracted to the candidate. So firstly, it will be the segment, which supports the candidate, and secondly, any other segment that is responsive to the message.¹⁶ Another important aspect to look at is the size of the segment. The parties try to appeal to the segments with the biggest amount of people, so they can count with as many votes as possible. Finally yet importantly, finances to address the campaigns.

We can see that these targets were all identifiable, which is a key element in target marketing.

Positioning

The last tool used in political marketing is positioning. Positioning does not mean how we show the candidate to the electors, but how they perceive him. Prior to that comes a strategy, a campaign and a lot of communication. Thus, what is relevant is that the message we want to send to people, our possible voters, needs to be easy to understand, very distinctive and different from other candidates' ones. It must symbolize the candidate's values and we want our target group to rely on it and put their trust onto our candidate.

“Positioning is a marketing tool that captures the essence of a candidate's vision and structures strategy.”¹⁷ In the following highlighted figure we can see Bannon came up with five key positioning criteria for the positioning strategies.

¹⁵ Kotler, P. *Marketing for nonprofit organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1982, p. 217.

¹⁶ Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *The Political Marketing Game*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, p. 23.

¹⁷ Newman, Bruce I. *The Marketing of the President. Political Marketing as Campaign Strategy*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994, p. 86.

Figure 2: Bannon's five principles for successful political positioning

Bannon's five principles for successful political positioning¹⁸

1. **Clarity of the position:** know what the competitive advantage is and what voters think of this.
2. **Consistency of position:** a voter needs to know where they are; the organization needs to offer a consistent and sustained approach.
3. **Credibility of positioning:** the voters' judgement of the quality of political proposals will always prevail.
4. **Competitiveness:** offer value that competing products do not.
5. **Communicable:** position must be easily communicated to targets.

1.3. Marketing mix applied to political marketing

Marketing mix, known also as the four Ps, is a “set of marketing tools that the firm uses to pursue its marketing objectives in the target market.”¹⁹ In the following table, we can compare the marketing mix with political marketing mix. There were different (very similar) approaches to the mix, but I decided to show the following as it was the most suitable.

¹⁸ Bannon, Declan. *Marketing segmentation and political marketing*. Paper presented to the UK Political Studies Association. University of Lincoln, 4-8 April; in Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p. 110.

¹⁹ Kotler, P., *Marketing Management*, (Millennium Edition), Custom Edition for University of Pheonix, Prentice Hall, 2000, p. 9.

Table 2: Marketing mix vs. Political marketing mix

Classic marketing	Political marketing
Product	Public figures, politicians, parties, political projects, ideologies, values
Price	Electoral votes and support
Promotion	Publicity, self-presentation, use of media
Place	Contact between the politician and the elector during the campaign

Source: MATUŠKOVÁ A., *Politický marketing: kořeny disciplíny*. In CHYTÍLEK, R. a kol. *Teorie a metody politického marketingu*. Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2012. p. 20.

Political **product** could be perceived as the promises we get from politicians, but it also could be the politicians themselves. “In politics, the application of marketing centers on the same process, but the analysis of needs centers on voters and citizens; the product becomes a multifaceted combination of the politician himself or herself, the politician's image, and the platform the politician advocates, which is then promoted and delivered to the appropriate audience.”²⁰

Price in our meaning has no monetary value. The voters are “paying”, giving votes, for the candidates they find the most satisfying.

Promotion in the marketing mix refers to raising customer awareness of a product or brand, generating sales, and creating brand loyalty. In the political marketing mix, we replace ‘product’ with ‘candidate’ and ‘sales’ with ‘support’ and get the same definition. The following figure shows what the promotional mix consists of.

²⁰ Newman, Bruce I. *Handbook of political marketing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1999, p. 3.

Figure 3: Promotional mix



Source: Bhasin, Hitesh. "Promotional mix - What are the different types of promotions?" Marketing91. February 27, 2017. Accessed December 03, 2017. <http://www.marketing91.com/promotional-mix/>.

Place means we need to find the right way to make an impact on the audience. Therefore, choose the fitting strategy using previously mentioned marketing tools.

1.4. Political campaign

“A campaign is a series of events all designed to communicate to an audience and garner support from that audience. ...the strategy originates with political actors, the leadership of the party or the candidate and their advisors, but is shaped by the media and organizational context of the campaign and then also by voter opinion. The modern campaign is, therefore, a highly marketized event, where media reaction, organizational responses and voter opinion are all factored into the design as part of an ongoing process.”²¹

Mark Penn creates a scheme in which the terms of the corporate battle are compared to those of a political campaign: choosing a brand or product can be associated with voting choice, brand loyalty to identification with a party, brand image to the candidate's reputation, etc. It also mentioned the product of politics as the “political product” and political brand to identify a party or one candidate.²² “Unlike a business, a political organization is driven not by profit but by a desire to implement a political ideology and approach to running the government. This by definition reflects political philosophies that drive the candidacy of the person running for office.”²³ To win, this organization needs to get people to vote for them more than for the opponent. For that the

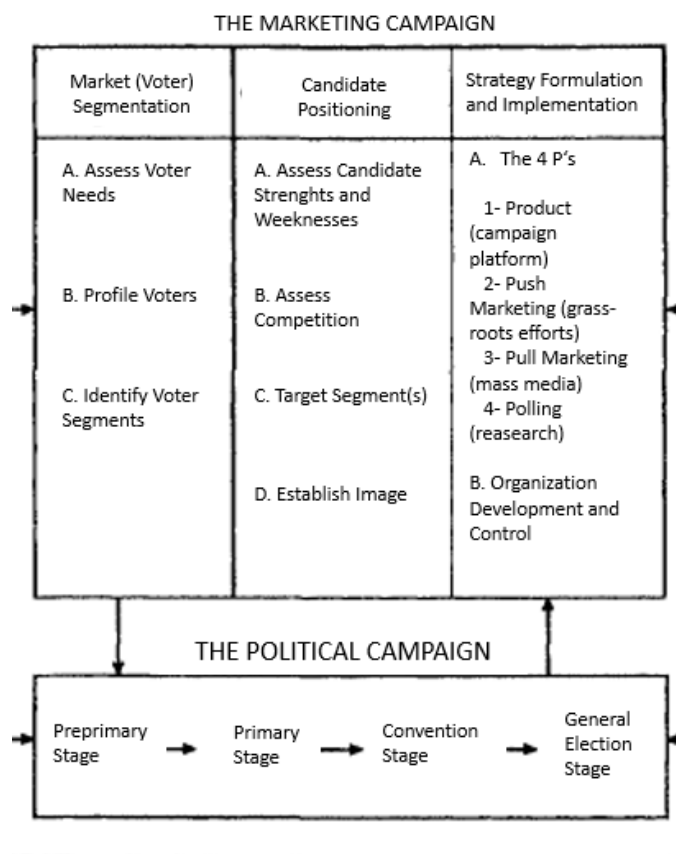
²¹ Lilleker, Darren G. *Key concepts in political communication*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2011, p. 49-51.

²² Penn, Mark J., and E. Kinney. Zalesne. *Microtrend*. Milano: Sperling & Kupfer, 2008.

²³ Newman, Bruce I. *The Marketing of the President. Political Marketing as Campaign Strategy*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994, p. 67.

campaign has to be based on a strategy and has to be all connected to a specific strategy. “The election campaign is a fundamental moment in the process of representation: it is the moment in which the candidate presents himself publicly, exposes his ideas and political program and declares how he intends on representing the people’s will, if he will be elected.”²⁴ Taking the marketing campaign part of Newman’s Model of Political Marketing, we see that based on the tools used to differentiate himself, a strategy is formed. It is all part of the campaign which ends with the general election stage and citizens voting. The whole campaign based on a good strategy and platform is therefore essential.

Figure 4: Newman’s Model of Political Marketing – the marketing and political campaign



Source: Newman, Bruce I. *The Marketing of the President. Political Marketing as Campaign Strategy*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994, p.12.

²⁴ Marian, Claudiu. "Communication and Political Marketing." *Research and Science Today* 2, no. 6 (2013), p. 44.

Finally, it needs to be mentioned that the campaigns are not only about tools and strategies. Here are the key players in political campaigns:²⁵

- Media
- Candidates
- Political consultants
- Polling
- Political parties
- Campaign finance

1.5. The role of mass media

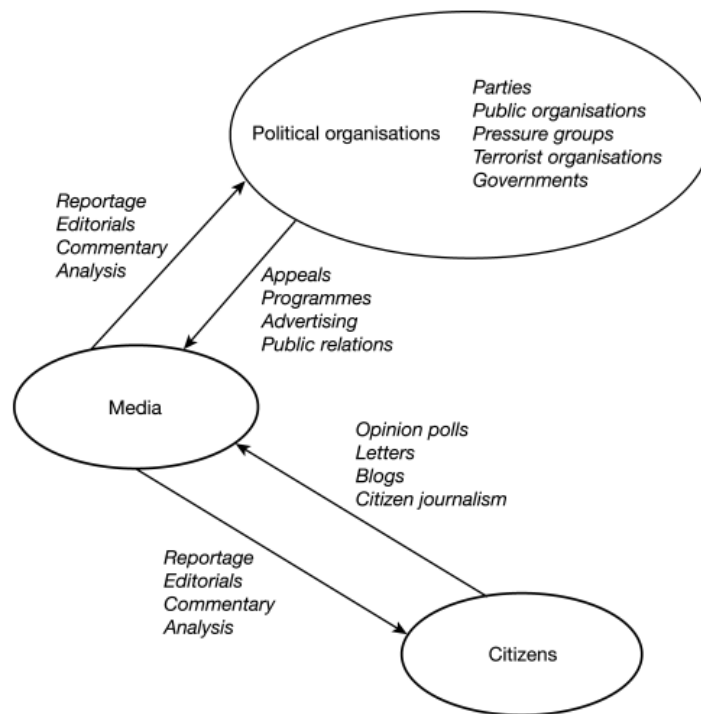
One of the fundamental parts of political communication are media. It comprises broadcasting, the print and online channels. Mass media should inform, educate and entertain.

The role of mass media is to be the carrier of information and to help freely spread it to the public. Media is supposed to be the helping hand of democracy, to be the “watch dog” of malpractice and create awareness. In the political process, media play a key role. In figure 4 we can see a scheme of political communication elements, where is pictured the role of media as a mediator between the political organizations and citizens. “Media serve dual functions. They are channels of communication between political candidates and citizens, conveying images that candidates present. They also interpret, bolster and challenge these images, with journalists, news stories, talk shows, commentaries, blogs, and Twitter feeds.”²⁶

²⁵ Perloff, Richard M., *The dynamics of political communication. Media and politics in a digital age*. New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 257-281.

²⁶ Jakubowicz, Karol H., *Television and elections in post-1989 Poland: How powerful is the medium?* In D.L. Swanson & P. Mancini, *Politics, media and modern democracy: An intentional study of innovations in electoral campaigning and their consequences*, p. 129-154. 1996. Westport, CT: Praeger.

Figure 5: Elements of Political Communication



Source: McNair, Brian. *An introduction to political communication*. Routledge, 2018, p.6.

In our context, it is also necessary to mention that in today's world, the media are owned by the wealthiest and most powerful people in the countries. What happens though, when these powerful people enter the world of politics? When we talk about newspapers or television channels, we could say they are rather bias. A very good example are two American news stations: the “ultra” red republican FOX NEWS and the “rather” blue democratic MSNBC. Of course, I cannot generalize, because there are many more which are independent and look like being very neutral; keeping the American stations as examples, here it would be CBS, CNN, NBC and so on. But when it comes to politicians owning media, a big question about conflict of interest arises.

There are three sociological perspectives²⁷ of the role and influence of mass media which are explained in the following three paragraphs.

²⁷ Fadul, Jose A., and Ronan S. Estoque. *A Textbook for an Introductory Course in Sociology*. Raleigh: Lulu Press, 2010, p. 100-101.

Limited-Effects theory²⁸ (also called the two-step flow of communication). The propaganda, after the World War II, gives media a new power. Mass media now can be used as a social good. But the power of media is limited. Professor's Paul Lazarsfeld continuous research came to a result that only a limited number of people can be influenced, therefore manipulated. This theory says that media is powerless in shaping public opinion. People generally do not believe to everything that is said in the media. There are three types of people considered: *Opinion Leaders*, *Opinion Followers* and *Gate Keepers*. Opinion Leaders most likely will not change their minds, they already have a sense of commitment (to their opinions) They are critical and very hardly manipulated by media. If any effect would occur, it would be very small. The Opinion Follower receives information from the Opinion leader and can also receive inputs from people he is surrounded by. The Gate keeper is the monitoring screen who shares the information from more sources. The critics have two major issues with this theory; firstly, media frame the discussions and is basically an agenda-setter, which this theory doesn't take into account, and secondly, today, media are much more widespread than when this theory came into existence.

Class-Dominant theory “argues that the media reflects and projects the view of a minority elite, which controls it.”²⁹ Meaning there is a small fraction of elites that controls most of the media outlet. As was mentioned above about having bias media: there is a point to this theory about “the fact that journalists, being more highly educated than the general population, hold more liberal political views, consider themselves “left of center,” and are more likely to register as Democrats.”³⁰ And therefore, that the elite controlling media is a politically liberal elite. Another critique of this theory is that smaller and not so powerful media allied, connected or just supported in exchange of favors.

Culturalist theory combines the two theories already stated. It says that people can be influenced to the point they allow it to influence them. They receive the message and then they have to work the meaning through: think about it, get an idea and make an opinion out of it. “Therefore, culturalist theorists claim that, while a few elite in large

²⁸ Katz, Elihu, Felix Lazarsfeld, Paul. Personal Influence—The Part Played By People in the Flow of Mass Communication. *American Sociological Review* no. 21 (1957), p.309, doi: 10.2307/139030.

²⁹ Fadul, Jose A., and Ronan S. Estoque. *A Textbook for an Introductory Course in Sociology*. Raleigh: Lulu Press, 2010, p. 100.

³⁰ Ibidem

corporations may exert significant control over what information media produces and distributes, personal perspective plays a more powerful role in how the audience members interpret those messages.”³¹

As mentioned in the beginning of this subchapter, media deliver political candidates’ messages. The actors must be sure to use the right media for their targeted audience; therefore, for older people who spend most of their time home, the best use would be through television, for mid class workers who wake up early in the morning and go to work by car, the radio they turn on while driving, and for younger generations online and social media. Media is an important factor and a main player in the whole process of campaigning it can be used for good, but it can also make a lot of harm.

³¹ Ivi, p. 101

2. Political communication

“Political communication is the process by which language and symbols, employed by leaders, media or citizens, exert intended or unintended effects on the political cognitions, attitudes, or behaviors of individuals or on outcomes that bear on the public policy of a nation, state, or community.”³²

There are four key shortcomings in (American) democracy³³:

1. Citizens are neither able nor motivated to partake in politics; in general, people are ignorant, and they don't know much about politics.
2. The media are neither free nor diverse; media are controlled by rich and powerful.
3. Politics is awash in greenbacks; wealthy people are affecting politics way more than others.
4. Contrary to deliberative democratic ideals, media coverage of politics is simplistic and superficial, and negative; today's politics are personalized and therefore personalities and scandals have a big weight in people's decision making.

There are also critiques of these shortcomings because to each one of them it is possible to find a different point of view, but based on studies, we will consider these above mentioned.

The three main players in political communication are: leaders, media and the public; therefore, political communication is concerned with how information spreads and influences politics and policy makers, the news media and citizens.³⁴ It is also defined as “the strategic use of communication to influence public knowledge, beliefs, and action on political matters.”³⁵ So the definitions are saying that political communication is how and with what are political matters communicated. Politicians try to set their agenda and transfer it to the citizens through media.

³² Perloff, Richard M., *The dynamics of political communication. Media and politics in a digital age*. New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 30.

³³ Ivi, p. 16

³⁴ Norris, Pippa. "Political Communications." *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*.

<https://www.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Political%20Communications%20encyclopedia2.pdf>.

³⁵ Swanson, David L., and Dan D. Nimmo. *New directions in political communication: a resource book*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1990, p. 9.

In this chapter, I will be talking about a specific part of political marketing; the brand (also leadership image), which nowadays is one of the most important components of communication. Especially because of the media factor as a carrier of the communication message. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate the audio-visual character into politics and the personality and image of the political persona becomes very important. Following the US, Italy also identified several strategies of the image management, which is today a regular part of the modern political communication. These are strategies are building an appealing image, establishing an emotional connection with voters, creating media events and going personal. The second, not less important, side of political communication I will talk about is the message itself. Narration, slogans and metaphors are used to get closer to the voters, frame the idea that needs to be conveyed. A subchapter is dedicated to the language in Italian politics, to connect this chapter with chapter 3.1. (socio-political situation), so that the reader will understand the link between the situation happening in Italy and the evolution of political language in the country.

2.1. Brand communication

Political product

It is important to define the product in political marketing. As it was mentioned already in one of the previous chapters; product becomes a multifaceted combination of the politician himself or herself, the politician's image, and the platform the politician advocates, which is then promoted and delivered to the appropriate audience.³⁶ We can divide the product into three parts: leader; party and principles (ideology). These three can be most of the times taken into consideration separately; a person can vote for his or her party, though not having any connection to the leader of it; as someone can vote for the program of a party because it is the best for the certain part of the country, although he or she would have otherwise chosen a party with whom she feels closer to ideologically.³⁷ It can be considered that our political product is the behavior of the party in the past, the present behavior and the promises that are made to the voters. Whichever one of the three, separated or not, it is imperative that the ideology is clear.

³⁶ See Table n.2

³⁷ Buttler, P. - Collins, N. *A conceptual framework for political marketing*, In: Newman, B. I.: *The handbook of political marketing*, Thousand Oaks, Sage publishing, 1999, p.58.

“It is argued that this is particularly important in nations where there are multiple parties within the parliament.”³⁸

Brand theory

Lately, has been put a lot of stress on branding as an essential part of political marketing. “The political brand is defined as an associative network of interconnected political information, held in memory and accessible when stimulated from the memory of a voter.”³⁹ Therefore, it is helping to give a perception to the possible voter about the candidate, or party. Taken from the economic branding with specific differences which are to be applied for the political market. With the brand, which could be the color of the logo, or the complete program of the party, the political audience will understand better what the candidate stands for. “Political branding is about how a political organization or individual is perceived overall by the public. A political brand is overreaching feeling, impression, association or image the public has towards a politician, political organization, or a nation.”⁴⁰ We could say that, political branding is a constant campaign⁴¹, it is constantly reaching to the voters. As in the economic brand management/marketing, the point is to differentiate yourself from the competition, but it is also a mean to connect to the ‘customer’, in this case, the voter. Political branding, then is, the making of a new relationship between the candidate and the citizens, their potential followers.

Once the branding is set in people’s minds, it is very hard to change it, thus it is necessary to be careful to set aside the candidate from a party when the candidate might leave, but the party should stay in the political scene. Critics say that it is not possible to apply the marketing practices since it is damaging the political process.⁴² For them, the ideology is the indispensable player in the whole campaigning, rather than marketing techniques. Some of these “have likewise referred to a candidate as a bar of soap, suggesting that a candidate is marketed like a product.” However, “to convey the impression that the marketing of candidates is similar to the marketing of a bar of soap is to oversimplify and minimize the uniqueness of the marketing

³⁸ Lilleker, Darren G. *Key concepts in political communication*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2011, p.42.

³⁹ French, Alan, and Gareth Smith. "Measuring political brand equity: a consumer oriented approach." *European Journal of Marketing* 44, no. 3/4 (2010): 460-77. doi:10.1108/03090561011020534..

⁴⁰ Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p.104.

⁴¹ Scammell, Margaret. "Political Brands and Consumer Citizens: The Rebranding of Tony Blair." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 611, no. 1 (2007): 176-92. doi:10.1177/0002716206299149.

⁴² O'Shaughnessy, Nicholas. "Toward an ethical framework for political marketing." *Psychology and Marketing* 19, no. 12 (December 2002): 1079–1094. doi:10.1002/mar.10054.

application to politics.”⁴³ The next concept presents Needham’s criteria for successful brands. Needham is explaining what does a brand need to have to appeal to voters and to get better results amongst people.

Needham’s criteria for successful brands⁴⁴

1. Brands act as simplifiers to make it easy for voters to understand what is being offered.
2. Brands are unique and clearly differentiated from the competition.
3. Brands are reassuring so voting for them is not risky.
4. Brands are aspirational and convey a positive vision for a better way of life.
5. Brands symbolize better internal values of the product or organization.
6. Brands are perceived as credible, delivering on their promises.

It can be observed that one of the easiest way to get connected to a party can be through the name or emblems of the parties: “the use of the epithets (as symbols) ‘Christian’, ‘National’ or ‘Socialist’”⁴⁵ or the use of logos “represent that which the party stands for; thus while the symbol of a dove or doves is used to denote peace, and symbols of other birds to denote freedom, still other symbols can be used to signify an attachment to workers”⁴⁶

The positive aspect about branding is that it is easy to measure. The research purpose of brands is to determine what are consumers thinking about certain brands, how are they successful, what impact do they have on consumers or just how they are perceived.

Brand equity

Unlike in economic branding, in political branding brand value doesn’t add any financial value to the candidate-product. Therefore, the more important marketing concept is brand equity which can measure the “value” of the brand. “Brand equity is about how much consumers value each brand relative to the competition and explores brand awareness, loyalty,

⁴³ Newman, Bruce I. *The Marketing of the President. Political Marketing as Campaign Strategy*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1994, p.9.

⁴⁴ Needham, Catherine. "Brands and political loyalty." *Journal of Brand Management* 13, no. 3 (2006): 179-181. doi:10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540260 in Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p.105.

⁴⁵ Lilleker, Darren G. *Key concepts in political communication*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2011, p.43.

⁴⁶ Ibidem

perceived quality and brand associations.”⁴⁷ To get a better perception of the image it is crucial to have constructed a strategy based on exceptional targeting.

Personalization of politics

Personalization responds to two phenomena: stronger consideration of the candidate itself instead of the party, institution, or topic; and the change of criteria in the evaluation of the characteristics of politicians regarding their professional competence and performance with the functions related to non-political personality traits.⁴⁸ It is connected to the transition to “modern politics”, with new processes, trends and technologies.⁴⁹ Personalization is closely tied to the evolution on modern media (especially TV). We can also look at personalization as putting media’s attention to personality characteristics of politicians.

Three dimensions of personalization are:⁵⁰

1. Institutional: emphasis is put on individual politicians; changing the institutional systems and mechanisms so that an individual would have more decision power, e.g. strengthening premier’s power inside the parliamentary democracy or the modification of an electoral system to a more personalized mechanism
2. Mediatic: we see a growing interest in specific politicians and a decrease in the interest in parties, organizations and institutions; we also observe that election campaigns and propaganda are focused very much on leaders, media then present their characteristics and qualities⁵¹
3. Behavioral: for politicians it means more individualized political activities and less collective party activities; this can lead to a centralization of a political personalization – the leader distances himself from the collective organization he belongs to.⁵²

⁴⁷ Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p.105.

⁴⁸ Kriesi, Hanspeter. "Personalization of national election campaigns." *Party Politics* 18, no. 6 (2011): 825-44. doi:10.1177/1354068810389643.

⁴⁹ Karvonen, Lauri. *The Personalisation of Politics: A Study of Parliamentary Democracies*. Colchester: ECPR Press, 2009, p.4.

⁵⁰ Rahat, Gideon, and Tamir Sheafer. "The Personalization(s) of Politics: Israel, 1949–2003." *Political Communication* 24, no. 1 (2007): 65-80. doi:10.1080/10584600601128739.

⁵¹ Karvonen, Lauri. *The Personalisation of Politics: A Study of Parliamentary Democracies*. Colchester: ECPR Press, 2009, p.4.

⁵² Balmas, Meital et al. 2012. *Two Routes to Personalized Politics: Centralized and Decentralized Personalization*. *Party Politics*. February 27, 2012, p. 4.

Leadership image

“Leader branding involves offering a simple and distinctive vision with values that connect with the target audience, that gains a strong awareness amongst the public and that stimulates positive associations.”

“The leader needs to convey a positive brand personality with characteristics such as sincerity, openness, competence and credibility.”

Let’s talk about a great example of political communication and brand communication: literature states why Obama was so successful in his presidential candidacy in 2008. First, winning against a stronger candidate (Clinton) in the primaries to get the nomination within the party, was thanks to a higher brand equity: he was attracting more voters from the outside of his party. Secondly, theorists state that his brand (2008 Obama), as the most known political brand, was very simple and reassuring, centered on a rhetoric of hope and possibilities.⁵³

In the following table, the reader can find what are the ideal characteristics of an effective political brand personality.

Table 3: Political brand personality characteristics⁵⁴

Smith’s components of the political brand personality	Guzman and Vincenta’s principles of effective political brand personality
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Honesty- Spirited- Image- Leadership- Toughness- Uniqueness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Capability- Openness- Empathy

Source: Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p. 108-9.

⁵³ Perloff, Richard M., *The dynamics of political communication. Media and politics in a digital age*. New York: Routledge, 2014, p. 206-208.

⁵⁴ Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p. 108-109.

2.2. The political language

One of the strongest means of communication, without any doubt, is the language. “Language is the distinctive characteristic of human beings. Without it we could not symbolize: reason, remember, anticipate, rationalize, distort, and evoke beliefs and perceptions about matters not immediately before us.”⁵⁵ Politicians need to speak to their audience and specifically persuade it to vote for them.

The Message

After the whole marketing process of finding out who are the targeted people, after the construction of the “marketing persona”, the campaign and the strategy must have a message that will be delivered to the public. For the delivery of the message is used the communication mix⁵⁶, there are four parts of the mix:

- Direct marketing
- Personal selling
- Public Relations
- Political advertising

The point of it is, that the audience should remember the message, and to do so and maximize this effect, it should be a short, non-articulated message, easy to understand, easy to remember, and even repeated very often.⁵⁷

The purpose of political communication and sending out a message, is primarily to get citizens’ vote and trust. For these reasons, politicians use a specific political language. The political discourse gets a distinct function in the process and that is the capacity to persuade.⁵⁸ Political discourse, then, is defined as a "social practice or as a particular form of interaction, characterized by a specific mode of use of language."⁵⁹ Marketing communication and language in politics in Italy is introduced by Berlusconi and Bossi⁶⁰, who changed the scene in the country into a political “spectacle” as Edelman is calling it.⁶¹

⁵⁵ Edelman, Murray. "The Political Language of the Helping Professions." *Political Language*, 1977, p. 296. doi:10.1016/b978-0-12-230662-4.50011-6.

⁵⁶ Kotler, P., *Marketing Management*, (Millennium Edition), Custom Edition for University of Phoenix, Prentice Hall, 2000, p.9-12.

⁵⁷ Cacciotto, M. *Marketing politico: Come vincere le elezioni e governare*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2011, p. 59

⁵⁸ Petrilli Raffaella. *La lingua politica. Lessico e strutture argomentative*. Roma: Carocci, 2015, p. 13.

⁵⁹ Cedroni Lorella. *Politolinguistica. L'analisi del discorso politico*. Roma: Carocci, 2014, p. 30-31.

⁶⁰ From the party Lega Nord.

⁶¹ Edelman, Murray. *Constructing the political spectacle*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Narration

One of the popular techniques of political communication is the narration. The storytelling has been a key part of different election campaigns, including Berlusconi, Sarkozy or Clinton. Narration is very important for politicians; through the story they can evoke emotions in their audience. "Examinations of political discourse show that it relies extensively on narrative patterns. This is partly the result of the human tendency to rely on narrative as a way of understanding the world and endowing it with meaning."⁶²

"In the political context, narrative forms of thought and expression, which are based on stringing events together into chains, carry another advantage: they are consistent with the political logic of trying to shape the present in light of lessons learned from the past."⁶³ Narrative is defined as it "is the representation of at least two real or fictive events or situations in time sequence, neither of which presupposes or entails the other."⁶⁴ Thus, we can say narration is a communication technique which helps focusing on a specific event or social context in time (in the past, present or even future). "We can define a political narrative as one that emerges from a formal political forum, such as a parliament, a cabinet, party meetings or political demonstrations, or as narrative produced by politicians and public officials in the course of their duties."⁶⁵

Politicians like to use metaphors in their speeches. Their function is to give the speech or story a frame and make it easier for the audience to understand the content. Metaphors can help understand, make something clearer and also aims to influence people's perception. Politicians are trying to impress emotionally, or even manipulate the audience into their story with the outcome to get their votes.⁶⁶

Political language in Italy

The traditional language in Italian politics is rather dark and to citizens somehow cryptologic. Another aspect is the multi-functionality of the word; politicians use many words

⁶² White, Hayden. *The value of narrativity in the representation of reality*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

⁶³ Shenhav, Shaul R. "Political Narratives and Political Reality." *International Political Science Review* 27, no. 3 (2006): p. 246. doi:10.1177/0192512106064474.

⁶⁴ Ivi, p. 247

⁶⁵ Ibidem

⁶⁶ Hanne, M., Crano, W., Scott Mio, J. *Warring with words: Narrative and Methaphor in politics*. New York: London: Psychology Press, 2015, p. 298.

from different sectors which can be very unclear to the audience it is aimed for.⁶⁷ Therefore, new features arose in the politics of the 90s. There is a switch from the abstract and old rhetorical system to the people's talk, very close to the everyday talks. The politician is trying to get closer to the voters by saying "I am one of you."⁶⁸

We can see that the "communicative strategy is marked by the 'personalization' pointing to the visual weapon of mimicry and gesture through a careful modulation of the voice, studying pauses and effects slogans accompanying a discursive apparatus that is distinct from past."⁶⁹ The other peak of the 90s is the 'spectacularization' of the speeches and the reduction of the gap between the audience and the politician.

Politics in this period are also defined by the usage of media, specifically the television. Political teams need to include communication specialists. The mass media are actually setting the agenda, not the politicians, as it was in the First Republic. This tendency means a better connection with the citizens and the electorate.⁷⁰

This medialization helps the spectacularization of the political communication. Therefore, the easiness of the language is very characteristic in this period. It can also be seen in the media during the elections of 1994. The political language is distancing itself from the formalities, technical and specialized terminology and from the darkness which was typical in the First Republic. This change from 'politichese', the language of politics, to 'gentese' the language of people, is a key feature in the nowadays politics, still.⁷¹

Another feature of the new language, is getting personal, even aggressive (towards the opponents). This verbal aggression can be seen in the political discourses, in the debates, which are showcased most importantly in TV. This, is still part of the politics being spectacularized.⁷² To mention other components of the Italian language, these are citations of authorities⁷³,

⁶⁷ Berruto, G. Sociolinguistica dell'italiano contemporaneo. Roma: Nuova Italia Scientifica, 1987, p.57.

⁶⁸ Jačová, Zora. "Il linguaggio politico della Seconda Repubblica." *Linguistica Pragmensia* 21, no. 1, p. 34 (2011).

⁶⁹ Ivi, p. 35

⁷⁰ Desideri Paola, La comunicazione politica: dinamiche linguistiche e processi discorsivi, in Stefano Gensini (a cura di), *Manuale della comunicazione*. Roma: Carocci, 1999, p. 393-395.

⁷¹ Serianni Luca, Antonelli Giuseppe. *Manuale di linguistica italiana. Storia, attualità, grammatica*. Mondadori: Milano, 2011, p.153.

⁷² Dell'Anna Maria Vittoria. *Lingua italiana e politica*. Roma: Carocci, 2010, p. 113-120.

⁷³ Ivi, p.114

referring to well-known person, someone valued and respected, or references to known places⁷⁴ that people can relate to.

⁷⁴ Ivi, p.113

3. Silvio Berlusconi

“What many foreign commentators, most famously the Economist magazine, on a number of different occasions over the years, deemed as Berlusconi’s ‘unfitness’ to rule Italy, his conflicts of interest in particular, seemed to some voters as indicating a sagacia (astuteness) and fortuna favorevole (good fortune) that they hoped might rub off on them.”⁷⁵

Silvio Berlusconi is one of the most controversial politician in Italian history, maybe in even in the whole world. He was the longest prime minister in post-war Italy. The media tycoon is the epitome of personalization.⁷⁶ This second part of the thesis will be the application of the theory onto the Berlusconi’s case and put into context what is important in Berlusconi’s political communication. The two following subchapters explain the background which is essential to mention before the analysis of the main communication components of Berlusconi’s strategy.

3.1. Social political background

In order to fully understand the level of innovation that Silvio Berlusconi brought into politics, it is necessary to analyze and put into context the facts in the socio-economic environment of those years. It is crucial to put the win of Berlusconi’s new movement into a framework of what was happening in the country of “La prima Repubblica” (1948 – 1993).

In 1992, a political scandal got uncovered which led to the end of the First Republic and to the complete breakdown of the Italian political system. Tangentopoli⁷⁷, the corrupt system uncovered by the judiciary investigations, called “Mani Pulite”, clean hands.⁷⁸ All the traditional parties completely disappeared, different politicians were arrested and many of them even committed suicide. The elections of that year were a mess. Tangentopoli first began on 17th February, the 1992 elections both for the Lower and Upper House were held the 5th and 6th April. Mani Pulite investigation was defined as a peaceful revolution of the civil society.⁷⁹

⁷⁵ Shin, Michael E., and John A. Agnew. *Berlusconi’s Italy: mapping contemporary Italian politics*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008.

⁷⁶ Fabbri, Sergio. “The rise and fall of Silvio Berlusconi: Personalization of politics and its limits.” *Comparative European Politics*, vol. 11, no. 2, Sept. 2012, pp. 158., doi:10.1057/cep.2012.18.

⁷⁷ The period of scandals took the name of Tangentopoli, the ‘city of bribes’, from the Italian word “tangente”, namely a system of bribes.

⁷⁸ Moliterno, Gino. *Encyclopedia of contemporary Italian culture*. London: Routledge, 2000, p.495-7.

⁷⁹ Travaglio, Marco. “Cronistoria '92-'93-'94-'95.” Mani Pulite. Accessed December 04, 2017. https://web.archive.org/web/20021004184156/http://www.manipulite.it/travaglio_cronistoria.php.

There was a need for change. And the change was inevitable – this led to several referenda. One of these were to introduce the majoritarian voting system in the Italian republic for the elections of the Senate which was voted to pass as a law. As a result of the referendum, the Mattarella law is implemented.⁸⁰⁸¹

Bettino Craxi, then prime minister, was found guilty of having accepted bribes. All the traditional parties were dying⁸², the chambers were not trusted anymore. In consequence of the referendum there was a new launched law which changed the political system. There was a desperate need for new elections, after this colossal crisis. This moment divides the First Republic from the Second Republic.

The Italian people were sick of politics, the new parties therefore had to change along the system. There was a feeling among the citizens that the politicians as professionals are dirty.⁸³ The right and left wings needed to distinguish themselves and there was also just the right space for new parties to come to life.

⁸⁰ 75% of the seats is a majoritarian system elected seats the other 25% are proportional

⁸¹ Law from 4th August 1993, n. 276 and n. 277

⁸² These are some of the biggest parties of Europe: Democrazia Cristiana, Partito Democratico della Sinistra, Partito Socialista Italiano

⁸³ Weber, Max. "WEBER, LA POLITICA COME PROFESSIONE." *Filosofico*. Accessed December 07, 2017. http://www.filosofico.net/Antologia_file/AntologiaW/weber4.htm.

In this big phase of transformation in Italian history, four main parties arose from this situation. These are briefly introduced in the following table.

Table 4: Four biggest parties arising from the period of 1992–1994

Partito Democratico della Sinistra	This party (PDS) emerged from the previous Partito Comunista Italiano (Italian Communist Party)	Left democratic socialism
Partito Popolare Italiano	PPI emerges from the ashes of Democrazia Cristiana (Christian-Democratic Party)	Centrist and Christian-leftist political party
Alleanza Nazionale	AN comes from a mixture of Movimento Sociale Italiano and several other parties that didn't identify as PDS or PPI	Right wing political party
Forza Italia!	A newborn party with Silvio Berlusconi in the center of it	Center right liberal party

Source: Rosetti, Antonella. "Elezioni 1994 e 1996: due casi di telepolitica a confronto." ReoCities. Accessed December 05, 2017. <http://www.reocities.com/athens/delphi/4092/elezioni.htm>.

January 26, 1994, Silvio Berlusconi stepped down into the political game. Presented himself and his new party in a video message that circulated the whole country.⁸⁴

Law Mattarella is first used in the 1994 elections. Beside the changed voting system, another essential part of this new era is that parties present coalition blocks and the front-runner for the prime minister position⁸⁵ before the election itself.⁸⁶ Because of that, people vote for the ideology, a certain party within the block, a specific person in the party and the vote goes to the whole coalition. Therefore, there are three presented blocks:

⁸⁴ Will be talked about in the chapter 4.2.

⁸⁵ The candidacy for the prime minister position is an official statement. After the elections, the parliament elects the prime minister and he needs a majority (50% + 1)

⁸⁶ Shin, Michael E., and John A. Agnew. *Berlusconi's Italy: mapping contemporary Italian politics*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008, p. 3-7

Table 5: Blocks presented at the Italian 1994 elections

Coalition	<u>Alleanza dei Progressisti</u>	<u>Patto per L'Italia</u>	<u>Polo della Libertà</u> and <u>Polo del Buon Governo</u>
Parties	PDS, and others	PPI, Patto Segni, and others	Forza Italia, Alleanza Nazionale, Lega Nord, and others
Leader	Achille Occhetto	Mariotto Segni	Silvio Berlusconi
Collocation	Left wing	Center	Center-Right

Source: Rosetti, Antonella. "Elezioni 1994 e 1996: due casi di telepolitica a confronto." ReoCities. Accessed December 05, 2017. <http://www.reocities.com/athens/delphi/4092/elezioni.htm>.

In political science, we can talk about two different types of voters: **The Traditionalists** and **the Pragmatists**. “Traditionalists have a list of key issues which define their political views and drive their political emotions. Such issues include abortion, immigration, welfare, health care, national security, education and many others”⁸⁷ So for our case, people who were attached to a communist party, would have very much likely voted for PDS. On the other had the pragmatists think of what the current parties are talking about and what speaks to them the best, that is probably who they are going to vote for in an election. Voting is a duty of citizen and they take it as a job they must do. “This professionalism in their voting role is one of the reasons political polls are often wrong in predicting how elections will turn out.”⁸⁸ The 1994 Italian election is the first election in which TV, news and media in general pay a strong attention to opinion polls. Tangentopoli scandal created an uncertainty that the surveys were very little reliable – two weeks before the election, 35 to 65% of people still didn’t make up their minds on who will they vote for. The country was in a complete turmoil.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ "Two Kinds of Voters." The Center for Social Leadership. Accessed November 28, 2017. <http://www.thesocialleader.com/2012/02/kinds-voters/>.

⁸⁸ Ibidem

⁸⁹ Teledemocrazia – elezioni 1994-1996: due casi di telepolitica a confronto. Antonella Rossetti.”

The absolute winner of the election became Berlusconi. Him and his coalition won about 43% of the votes. Alleanza dei Progressisti got almost 34%, and Patto Segni less than 16%.⁹⁰

3.2. Economical background

After jurisprudence university and military service, Berlusconi got into construction business, building (beside other) a residential quarter Milano 2.

Cable TV Telemilano was set up for the Milano 2 structure; with this station he started to build what would later become his Mediaset media empire. He bought all the inferior media that had no financial means to stay alive and after the change of law in 1976⁹¹, his channel *Canale 5* became a national TV station. A few years after that he bought other two stations: Italia 1 and Rete 4. And the advertisement on these channels are provided by Publitalia 80, also Berlusconi's organization.⁹²

Until the 70s there were three national TV stations, which politically belonged to the three main parties:

- RAI 1 (Cristian Democrats)
- RAI 2 (Socialists)
- RAI 3 (Communists)

The private sector was not allowed to broadcast on national level, only regional. And the public television had limited room for political broadcasting, therefore, Berlusconi saw a niche from which he could build a lucrative business. Berlusconi's programs became the main mean of political communication, for parties and candidates.

Thanks to Mediaset, his assets grew, and he was able to buy the publishing (editorial) house Mondadori, shares in Mediolanum insurance company and most importantly for him, the AC Milan football club. Also, because of Mediaset, he got famous and publicized. His stations

⁹⁰ "Ministero dell'Interno." Archivio Storico delle Elezioni - Senato del 27 Marzo 1994. Accessed November 28, 2017.

<http://elezionistorico.interno.it/index.php?tpel=S&dtel=27%2F03%2F1994&tpa=I&tpe=A&lev0=0&levsut0=0&es0=S&ms=S>.

⁹¹ Until then, there was state television monopoly

⁹² Numerato D., 2002. Silvio Berlusconi: Mediální kontrolor vlastního rozhodování. *Revue pro média: Časopis pro kritickou reflexi médií*, č. 3.

were very ‘Americanized’ in the content and character. Italia 1 was aiming young people, Rete 4 women and older people and Canale 5 was supposed to be a family channel. Most of the programs gave space to different kind of agenda, “trashy” TV, and a lot of fun.

Fininvest, one of the biggest holdings in Italy, comprises of all Berlusconi family actions. The organization’s main purpose was financing political expenditures. Not only he took from Fininvest monetary means, but also human capital. Other than that, he used connections he made during his time as a businessman, his connections were crucial for winning the elections.⁹³

Berlusconi, scared of what would happen to his companies, especially Mediaset, after his friend and confidant, then prime minister, Bettino Craxi was investigated in the Tangentopoli scandal. These two both cooperated: Craxi used Berlusconi’s TV empire to promote himself and in return, Berlusconi had a government officer promoting laws to help Mediaset continue growing. During the scandal, people started to be inclined to vote parties close to communism, which could bring the company to ruins. The company has already been dealing with issues and debts. With such an incentive, Berlusconi decided to handle the situation himself and to enter politics.

Berlusconismo is a name for the period in time, when Berlusconi started to be a part of people’s everyday life with owning companies in different fields – people live in his buildings, watch movies in his cinemas, go shopping to his supermarkets and cheer for his football club.⁹⁴

⁹³ Fella, Stefano, Carlo Ruzza. *Re-inventing the Italian Right: territorial politics, populism and post-fascism*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

⁹⁴ Numerato D. Silvio Berlusconi: Mediální kontrolor vlastního rozhodování. *Revue pro média: Časopis pro kritickou reflexi médií*, č. 3. (2002).

4. Analysis of Berlusconi's communication strategy

Silvio Berlusconi's entrance into the field of politics has been one of the major radical changes of the recent Italian political history. It was the first time that marketing was widely used in politics and it enhanced dramatically the role of the Media in the political process. Because the political mechanism changed greatly, a completely new communication strategy permeated the so-called Second Republic of Italy. In 1994 elections, media are mesmerized by Forza Italia and Berlusconi. His profile is something completely new and had never seen before. The theatrical entrance, '*discesa in campo*', became a huge media event. Berlusconi was a very known personality of the business world, owning several companies in different fields, and this attracted the media attention. Even though some of the other political candidates for that election run were also new political personalities, Berlusconi was the outsider. This is also one of the reasons why Berlusconi had a certain prominence in the Italian media.

Following the golden rules of mediatized leadership⁹⁵, he used the television to create a relationship with the citizens, turning the TV audience into his followers first, and voters later. He took advantage of his personality, developed a communication strategy, framed issues, turned them into slogans and through metaphors addressed many problems happening in the country. "To a middle class tired of high taxes and big government and still shocked by the corruption scandals, Berlusconi proposed a mix of free-market ideology and the American dream."⁹⁶ Using a populist tone, the political underdog, was able to transmit the message of hope to the Italian people and make them trust him with the future of the country.

Newman's Model, presented in chapter 1.1, can rather well explain and synthesize the *modus operandi* of Silvio Berlusconi. Newman's 4Ps (product, push marketing, pull marketing and polling) were incorporated in Silvio Berlusconi's communication strategy in the campaign platform (treating his personality as the *product*), in his message (as *push marketing*), his attention for mass media (*pull marketing*) and his interest in the polling industry (*polling*). Since he was the CEO of different sectorial organizations, he learned deeply from them how these different sectors worked and used to his advantage three important components of political

⁹⁵ Mourdoukoutas, Panos. "The Ten Golden Rules Of Leadership." *Forbes*. December 05, 2015. Accessed December 03, 2017. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/panosmourdoukoutas/2015/12/05/the-ten-golden-rules-of-leadership/#fc1ad31425b7>.

⁹⁶ Campus, Donatella. "Mediatization and Personalization of Politics in Italy and France: The Cases of Berlusconi and Sarkozy." *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 15, no. 2 (2010): p. 227. doi:10.1177/1940161209358762.

strategy: segmentation, positioning and targeting. Bannon, (see chapter 1.2.) analyzed deeply these different components in light of Silvio Berlusconi's strategy and draw five principles:

The first principle, **Clarity of the position**, is very much related to the socio-economic situation at that time in Italy. Silvio Berlusconi took absolute advantage connected to the situation in the country (explained in the chapter 3.1.). There was a niche in the market for new parties, since the other outcoming parties were somehow born from the old traditional ones, FI and Lega Nord were the two new parties, with completely new people, with a completely new message that would touch people. Berlusconi though, was a kind of celebrity already, therefore he knew 'media' would go crazy over him. Not mentioning, that he owned media where he could mediatize himself and his party. **Consistency of position**: the voter was supposed to see Berlusconi as one of them, an ordinary man, who was very disturbed by the past events of corruption in the country's politics. **Credibility of positioning**: being a new party, a new politician, people could only judge him as an entrepreneur and businessman; and he was a successful one. He offered Italian people the miracle, because he created it for himself before. **Competitiveness principle**: he offered himself, as a product, none of the politicians were presented as ordinary people, but more like politicians as professionals; he offered people a new government without corruption, the new party was composed by all business connected young men and women, and he offered to be a leader, which seemed quite natural for him. **Communicable principle**: this is the one principle, which there is no disputing about; Berlusconi's communication style, which can be seen in many interviews, movies, speeches, was just perfect. His ability to speak and, I would even say, perform left made the country believe in him (several times) and made many social scientists study his ways of doing.

This chapter aims to analyze, in light of the aforementioned theories and schemas, the figure of Silvio Berlusconi under different aspects of his campaigning strategy. In order to identify the reasons of his success I have decided to consider three aspects of his campaign, that I consider crucial. Branding, the language and the use of media. These three indicators are important factors in every political campaign, but also, looking at the Berlusconi's specifics within political marketing, especially the Newman's model, the three elements emerge quite naturally.

4.1. Berlusconi as a brand: a non-politician, politician

Berlusconi took control of the situation after Tangentopoli. People could not stand anymore all the lies and corruption happening in the country. They needed a change, they needed something new. Thanks to his assets, he was able to build a strong and sustainable political party from scratches, Forza Italia. The leader, Silvio Berlusconi, is a notable businessman, who made several good decisions and led his companies to be prosperous. And lastly, he is just like the people. An entrepreneur, a son of a bank employee and a football fan who is disgusted by the intrigues of politics and wants a better home (country) for him and his family. He is a real outsider, and this can be considered one of the features that helped him achieve success. He called himself a ‘successful and self-confident manager, businessman and football fan.’ He promised the citizens, in his candidacy speech, that he would have made possible for them the same wealth structure he was able to achieve for his companies.

Coming from a non-political world, he put an emphasis on average populist topics, without necessarily being bounded by ideology. Berlusconi’s revolutionary political marketing in 1994 crashed the Italian politics with a massive intensity. He showed to be more autonomous than his European colleagues; he never had a typical spin doctor, who would create Berlusconi’s image and identity. He mostly relied on his charm and his instincts; he was sort of his own spin doctor.⁹⁷ Another feature that helped Berlusconi win, was his charismatic personality. He knew how to appeal to people. His instincts, the way he spoke, and who he was; that all showed his ability to be a natural leader.⁹⁸ If we see Table 3, we can find most of the features of a successful political brand in Berlusconi’s personage. Accordingly, referring to chapter 2.1., this way, with these features he was branding himself. Additionally, his campaign became one of the most organized and most intensive electoral campaigns in Italy.⁹⁹ Even though Newman states that the first of the P’s (the product) is a campaign platform, in Berlusconi’s case, since Forza Italia was not really bounded by one ideology, I would much rather use the significance of a product as I mentioned in Table 2 (chapter 1.3.), as a public figure. Speaking about the lack of ideology, Berlusconi is proving wrong the critics that say, that it is not possible to apply the political marketing because it is damaging the political process (chapter 2.1.). He is making a platform out of himself, as can be seen in his campaign, his persona is one of the most important features:

⁹⁷ Ventura, S. *Il racconto del capo. Sarcosy e Berlusconi*. Bari-Roma: Laterza, 2012, p. 87.

⁹⁸ Paolucci, Caterina. The nature of Forza Italia and the Italian transition. *Journal of Southern Europe and Balkans*, vol. 8 (2006), no. 2, s. 166.

⁹⁹ Ventura, S. *Il racconto del capo. Sarcosy e Berlusconi*. Bari-Roma: Laterza, 2012, p. 86.

it can be the way he presented himself, who he was, or the way he spoke to the people, but it was always him. As it was also said in the chapter 2.1., the political product is divided into three parts: leader; party and ideology. Since it was mentioned already that the party was not really tied to an ideology, it leaves us to the leader and party. The party, Forza Italia, is all about its leader, which means, again, that the product in the case of Silvio Berlusconi and FI, is him as a leader.

A new kind of party: Forza Italia

Berlusconi's Forza Italia was one of the parties that were born in the process of the Italian political crisis. The concept of the party was followed by political scientists and two of them built a theoretical idea out of FI. "The case of FI is probably the most extreme example to date of a new political party organizing as a business firm."¹⁰⁰

Business-firm party is a quite recent type of a party and "originates from the private initiative of a political entrepreneur of a commercial company."¹⁰¹ The Business-firm party model has, in the past years, become a trend in Europe, but hasn't really spread to the US, where political marketing comes from. "In Forza Italia the distinctions between analogy and reality are blurred: the "political entrepreneur" in question is in fact a businessman, and the organization of the party is largely conditioned by the prior existence of a business firm."¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ White, Hayden. The value of narrativity in the representation of reality. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987, p.320.

¹⁰¹ Katz, Richard S., and William J. Crotty. Handbook of party politics. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2014, p. 252.

¹⁰² Hopkin, Jonathan, and Caterina Paolucci. "The business firm model of party organisation: Cases from Spain and Italy." *European Journal of Political Research* 35, no. 3 (1999): 320. doi:10.1111/1475-6765.00451.

Figure 6: Description of a Business firm party

Business firm party	
<i>Period of dominance</i>	1990s to present.
<i>Locus of origination</i>	Extra-parliamentary initiative of political entrepreneurs.
<i>Organizational structure</i>	Minimal formal organization, with hierarchical control by the autonomous entrepreneur and his/her employees.
<i>Nature and role of membership</i>	Membership minimal and irrelevant.
<i>Primary resource base</i>	Corporate resources.

Source: Adapted from Handbook of Political Party, p. 262 - 263

The mainstream mass type party was in this period changing to a catch-all type of party. Referenda, personalization and personality started to have a major meaning in the processes of the political system, due to an increase of democratization. Putting FI in a parallel with the Lees-Marshment model, explained in the chapter 1.1., we see that FI is approached as a Market Oriented Party. Berlusconi uses market intelligence to find the demand and gives people what they need, without trying to change their needs. Then, if on one side, FI lacked the organizational structure, the ideology and the territoriality, on the other side, it had the captivating features of a strong leadership of the party and its satellite companies. Since personalization is very much based on the elements of leadership, one of the reasons of Berlusconi's win was the ability of personalization of politics.

Additionally, the way Berlusconi selected politicians to run with him in FI is very interesting. His own advertisement agency, Publitalia, was selecting the candidates to be part of this new party. Publitalia had three basic demands on possible candidates: they needed to be

young of age, they needed to have experience in a private business field, and the last one, they could not have had any previous political experience. There requests on new politicians were supposed to show and prove to the country, that FI was the change that Italy needed. It is also worth mentioning he is creating strategic coalitions before the elections, as it was supposed to be done in the new system of the Second Republic. There are to be created blocks of coalitions to run in the election. FI created two different coalitions, Polo delle Libertá and Polo del Buon Governo. Berlusconi's strategy was to create one coalition for the southern regions' seats and the other one for the northern regions' seats. Berlusconi based his political alliances on territory, this is a result of the geographical segmentation (chapter 1.2.). This strategy was very clever as there always were distinct differences between the Italian south and Italian north.

An epitome of personalization

Due to the country's political situation, there was a very good chance that politics in Italy would be personalized soon. As mentioned in chapter 3.1, one of the key external factors that determined the results of the 1994 elections was the new electoral law. By notion, the more majoritarian a system is, the more the importance of the leaders become. One need only to think about the system in place in the United States of America, where parties of the caliber of the Democrats or the Republicans are absolutely secondary to their leader, where the nominee becomes the 'owner of the party itself. The 'Legge Mattarella' created a system in which the leader achieved a greater importance than ever before. The fact that coalitions and leaders (running for prime minister office) were formed and announced before the election meant making a significant player out of the coalitions' leader. Berlusconi adapted his political marketing and his campaign strategy to this. Him, in the center and ahead of his party.

With the popularity of the television, the leadership could become very mediatized. As Newman says: "One of the most important marketing tools a politician can use to drive public opinion is his or her image."¹⁰³ Therefore, one of the main tasks of the political leader is to create and then sell his image to the audience. Berlusconi was very successful in promoting his private life and publicize himself as a political figure. He did not talk about the party, he talked about himself and what he could do for the Italian people. Berlusconi had it easy, owning several TV channels. The personalization of the leader passes through two main spheres: the one of politics and the one of information; the leader and the media owner. In personalization, the two spheres, are

¹⁰³ Newman, Bruce I. *The mass marketing of politics: democracy in an age of manufactured images*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, c1999, p.88.

normally separated, but aligned one another. In this case, these two facets of the person are coinciding. “Berlusconi could transform his media power into political power, making his media empire the basis for FI.”¹⁰⁴ With the help of his media company, he won the 1994 elections, and after that other two times.¹⁰⁵ The techniques used, such as marketing and advertisement lead to the Americanization of the Italian politics. The spectacularization and personalization go hand in hand with media, and they try to adapt to the media process logic. Berlusconi talks to people as being one of them, loosens from the not understandable language and puts himself in the middle and ahead of the party and centralizes it around himself, following the American political pattern. Personalization, after the US, happened in different European countries. “But the key difference between Berlusconi and the other national political leaders of our time is that only in Italy has the leader also controlled the process of personalization of which he has been beneficiary.”¹⁰⁶¹⁰⁷ In chapter 2.1. there are mentioned three types of personalization. Berlusconi’s case is a mixture of the institutional and mediatic personalization. The third, behavioral, dimension never happened, he never distanced himself from his party. On the other hand, the institutional personalization, which means stressing the political leader and the mediatic personalization, which stands for a mediatic interest in single politicians and not parties anymore, we can see throughout his whole political career. This rather extreme *berlusconian* personalization of politics had an impact on the next generation of politics, in Italy and in the international sphere.

4.2. The message: Berlusconi’s innovation in political language

Following the corruption scandals, people could not stand anymore the politicians who would speak in a specific political language. Another communication strategy that Berlusconi used is that he spoke to people, he listened to them and explained things to them: making out of himself a politician whom people can trust. Based on the demographical and socio-economic criteria of segmentation, as explained in the chapter 1.2., he targeted all the ordinary people, who did not understand the political language, the lower and middle class, the older generation without higher education which is described in the chapter 2.2. His political team composed by

¹⁰⁴ Fabbrini, Sergio. “The rise and fall of Silvio Berlusconi: Personalization of politics and its limits.” *Comparative European Politics*, vol. 11, no. 2, Sept. 2012, pp. 159., doi:10.1057/cep.2012.18.

¹⁰⁵ Ibidem

¹⁰⁶ D’Arma, Alessandro. *Media and politics in contemporary Italy: from Berlusconi to Grillo*. Lexington Books, 2015, p.12.

¹⁰⁷ In 2017, we can not talk about Berlusconi as the only one, anymore.

competent managers from Fininvest led his party to victory with different populist slogans and an outstanding propaganda.¹⁰⁸

Starting the trend of the new political language in Italy (chapter 2.2.), Berlusconi's language consisted of short sentences, he transmitted a concrete and clear message, he often used words like real, practical, tangible, achievement, accomplishment, and so on.¹⁰⁹ Speaking in the 'we' and 'you' form is a specific technique used by Berlusconi. '*We, together, have to do this for us.*' He was making the audience feel a feeling of collectivity and a united identity. Along with it, he made people feel different kinds of emotions, like solidarity, love and friendship. Another used mean in his campaign were metaphors. Being connected to the football field he used many metaphors from football, but he also used connotations from marketing, advertisement or religion. Also, we can find a lot of similar words in his speeches and repeating of words. 'Repeat a lie often enough and it becomes the truth.' But in Berlusconi's meaning, it doesn't necessary mean he was lying, but to make something believable, it is necessary to repeat it over and over.

Beside the ones above mentioned, there are three other specific techniques which Berlusconi used in his political language. First, the idealization of the Self, where he is constructing and delivering to the people a narcissistic image of himself. He is the perfect hero, that will save the whole country.¹¹⁰ Then, identification, which makes people believe the leader is one of them, an ordinary man.¹¹¹ And the last one is projection, distancing the Self from any negativity or criticism and distancing himself from the enemy.¹¹²

Examples of Berlusconi's communication slogans:

Forza Italia

- The name of the party itself "Forward, Italy!": more a slogan than a name, sounding like a cry of support for the Italian national football team."¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Progacci, Giuliano. *Dějiny Itálie*. Praha: Nakladatelství Lidové noviny, 2007, p.395.

¹⁰⁹ Ventura, S. *Il racconto del capo. Sarkosy e Berlusconi*. Bari-Roma: Laterza, 2012, p. 89.

¹¹⁰ Amadori A. *Mi consenta: metafori, messaggi e simboli: come Berlusconi ha conquistato il consenso degli italiani*. Milano: Libri Scheiwiller, 2002, pag. 44.

¹¹¹ Ibidem

¹¹² Ivi, cit. pag. 35

¹¹³ Sznajder, Mario. "Italy's right-wing government: legitimacy and criticism." *International Affairs* 71, no. 1 (1995): 83-102. doi:10.2307/2624011, p.93.

“I tell you that we can, I tell you that we have to build all together, for us and for our children, a new Italian miracle”

- In his speech he mentions the Italian miracle¹¹⁴, he says he will bring back the boom of the 60s in case he is elected.
- We can also observe the use of ‘we’ and ‘us’.

Gli azzurri (the blues)

- In Berlusconi’s storytelling there are two kinds of people; the ‘good’ blue and the communist red, whom it is better to avoid¹¹⁵. The blue, are the liberals and democrats led by Berlusconi. Also, the blues is connected to the national football team, ‘la squadra azzurra’.

The nine minutes that changed the country¹¹⁶

The 26th January of 1994, Berlusconi officially announced his decision to run for the upcoming electoral turn and for the first time he presented Forza Italia, the new-born party in the Italian political arena. Using a video-message that would make the tour of the country, this was the start of the blossoming political career of Silvio Berlusconi. The video of nine minutes and half was broadcasted in all the evening TV news of the country (when the whole program lasted about 30 minutes). That’s how important the message was.

“I decided to enter the field to take care of the public affairs because I don’t want to live in an illiberal country, governed by immature forces and men tied to a politically and economically failing past.” He declares his resignation from the companies (not AC Milan), and straightaway, he attacks the enemy, communists and leftists, not leaving out that they are a part of the illegally financed government. He also addresses the need to restore the country, referring to himself as a hero, who will save the country, because the old “prophets and saviors” are not to be trusted. Berlusconi also proposes to the citizens the “same objectives and values” that helped to develop freedom in all great western democracies, claiming again that “the orphans of communism, are not prepared to govern the [Italian] country”, and they lead the country to the deceleration of the economy’s liberation. “They do not believe in the market,

¹¹⁴ Italian economic miracle: period of strong economic growth in Italy from the ‘50s to the late ‘60s.

¹¹⁵ Ventura, S. *Il racconto del capo. Sarcozy e Berlusconi*. Bari-Roma: Laterza, 2012, p. 98.

¹¹⁶ "1994 - Discorso televisivo discesa in campo di Silvio Berlusconi." YouTube. March 29, 2017. Accessed December 04, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MISdRrYrn9g>.

they do not believe in private initiative, they do not believe in profit, they do not believe in the individual”, Berlusconi says, still attacking the enemy and therefore showing the need to fight it.

He is asking the citizens to step down with him. “What we want to do with it [with Forza Italia], is a free organization of totally new voters”, FI’s goal is to unite Italy and give the people a government that meets the needs of ordinary people. He also communicates what is he offering with Forza Italia; he says, “we want to renew Italian society, we want to give support and trust to those who create jobs and well-being, we want to accept and win the great productive and technological challenges of Europe and the modern world.” Mentioning both the southern and northern Italy, and wanting a great future for the both of them; a government that needs to fight criminality, corruption and drugs; he says he is an ordinary citizen, who believes in the dream of a better Italy, a good Italy. And finishing with the words: “I tell you that we can, I tell you that we must build together for ourselves and for our children, a new Italian miracle. ”

The whole speech can be found in attachment 1.

Berlusconi, a populist?

“Berlusconi’s political style in many ways reflects a classic populist approach, casting himself as a political outsider, speaking the language and thinking the thoughts of the common man and representing the interests of the latter against a self-serving political elite made up of professional politicians.”¹¹⁷ We can see that this kind of language is a part of the typical language of the Second Republic, as it is described in the chapter 2.2.

According to Taguieff¹¹⁸, Berlusconi is a telepopulist leader: proclaiming himself as a defender of people, establishing his leadership on TV. Populism is defined by the Oxford dictionary as “a political approach that strives to appeal to ordinary people who feel that their concerns are disregarded by established elite groups.” It is then necessary to understand the relationship between the elites and the masses. There is a certain historical tradition in populism in Italy, but the 90s populism is characterized by Berlusconi with FI and Umberto Bossi (Lega

¹¹⁷ Woods, Dwayne, and Barbara Wejnert. *The many faces of populism: current perspectives*. United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing, 2014, p. 44.

¹¹⁸ Pierre-André Taguieff, *L’illusion populiste, de l’archaïque au médiatique*, Paris 2002, p. 80; Yves Surel, ‘Berlusconi, leader populiste?’, in Oliver Ihl, Janine Chêne, Eric Vial and Ghislain Wartelot, eds, *La tentation populiste au cœur de l’Europe*, Paris 2003, p. 113–29; Laclau, *On Populist Reason*, London and New York 2005, p. 176.

Nord)¹¹⁹. Political science says that Berlusconi's political activity has only elements of populism, especially his political communication. Unlike Lega Nord party, which owned mass mobilization and a coherent program.¹²⁰

As Berlusconi mentioned from the beginning, FI is not a party, it is a movement, although we can find here the lack of the party's manifesto. The concept of populism has the element of a charismatic leader – who Berlusconi definitely is. The leader card, when played well can lead to loyalty from voters, which is a sign of a good political marketing, because it adds value to brand equity (chapter 2.1.).¹²¹ One of the reasons why FI was popular among people are the topics the party addressed; those were anti-communism, problematics of the differentiation between the old and new, and an emotional and personalized discourse.¹²² Populism always addresses an enemy; and Berlusconi's target and FI's enemy is the Communist Party and communism. We can see in his communication that he also fights against the political establishment, calling them 'the others'. Berlusconi's narration and rhetoric, showcasing his leadership, frequently mentions the will of a united Italy, he is fighting against the corrupted and politicized country, he believes in traditions and family. He is appealing to people, telling them that people compose the state and they are the ones to make the rules; and that citizens should have the last word, therefore, wanting a direct democracy. All these mentioned in this paragraph are signs of populism, which would recognize Berlusconi as a populist.

4.3. Media, the power to change a campaign

Media coverage represented a major component of Italian politics from 1994 elections onwards. It is something that politicians always considered while preparing their electoral campaigns, as it is the easiest way to reach average citizens while they form their opinion. 'Conventional wisdom says that the mass media, in particular television, have played a key role in emphasizing leadership and personal characteristics. There is no doubt that television encourages the personalization of politics by bringing candidates' faces and voices into citizens' homes on a regular basis.'¹²³ Silvio Berlusconi, just before announcing his decision to run,

¹¹⁹ Both of these parties (Forza Italia and Lega Nord) were born in the same time.

¹²⁰ Taggart, Paul. *Populism*. Buckingham: Open University Press, 2000.

¹²¹ Paolucci, Caterina. "The nature of Forza Italia and the Italian transition." *Journal of Southern Europe and Balkans* 8, no. 2 (2006), s. 166.

¹²² Kunc, Jiří. *Stranické systémy v rekonstrukci*. Praha: Sociologické nakladatelství, 2000, p. 114–115

¹²³ Vittori, David. "Is Populism Changing the Political Representation of Western Democracies?" *Journal of Political Sciences & Public Affairs* 03, no. 01 (2015). doi:10.4172/2332-0761.1000140, p.220

owned 6 television channels, 3 national (Mediaset channels) and 3 regional (TelePiù). Being the owner of the one of the prominent Italian television networks was a key determining factor of Berlusconi's electoral success. His television channels were, of course, an invaluable resource in giving the new party and its leader all the visibility and the publicity they needed. However, attributing the 1994 victory of Berlusconi to the ownership of Mediaset alone would be an exaggeration.

"Berlusconi won because he was able, through professionalized skills, to make use of the opportunities offered by the new mass media system."¹²⁴ An important argument, why Berlusconi won, is that he knew media and understood the effects of their usage. Even though roughly half of the national television channels was owned by his empire, all the media devoted a lot of attention to him. His field entrance 9 minutes long video message aired on different TV stations. For example, RAI 3, public television traditionally close to the Communist Party, gave Forza Italia a larger amount of coverage than to the PDS (which was traditionally connected to RAI 3).¹²⁵ Nevertheless, owning commercial TV was a deciding factor of Berlusconi's first political success.

Switch from monopoly to duopoly

It was mentioned in the chapter 3.2, that Berlusconi started to own TV media, to be able to broadcast in his residential quarter of Milan. There was a time in Italy in which the clear majority of television channels were state owned, and it was rather hard to access the market in many ways. From the moment that broadcasting at local level was deregulated in 1976, he never stopped expanding his TV assets. Firstly, he founded Publitalia80, an advertising company commercializing a variety of products; then created the 'Canale 5', and bought 'Rete 4' and 'Italia 1' from 2 major network owners, who at that time had financial issues. Later, these three channels will form Mediaset, the largest private owned broadcast of the entire country. With this starting media empire, he got a nickname 'Sua Emittenza', Mr. Broadcasting. Getting that much control of the national TV¹²⁶ arose the interest of the political establishment, which could not ignore the situation.¹²⁷ The attention posed on whether a private businessman could own

¹²⁴ Negrine, Ralph M., Paolo Mancini, Christina Holtz-Bacha, and S. Papathanassopoulos. *The professionalisation of political communication*. Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2007, p. 118.

¹²⁵ Marletti, Carlo, and Franca Roncarolo. "Media Influence in the Italian Transition from a Consensual to a Majoritarian Democracy." *Democracy and the Media*: 195-240. doi:10.1017/cbo9781139175289.006, p. 226.

¹²⁶ About 30%.

¹²⁷ Mazzoleni, Gianpietro. "Towards a 'Videocracy'? Italian Political Communication at a Turning Point." *European Journal of Communication* 10, no. 3, 291-319. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323195010003001, p. 296

such a great empire of media (thought again to be the source of information forming citizens' opinions) started a process in which politics was supposed to regulate the market. Berlusconi's television empire raised several questions, and many politicians at that time believed that the state was the natural owner of this form of information. Berlusconi, nevertheless, could rely on his close friend Bettino Craxi, who supported him and the idea of private television in the hands of private citizens.

Berlusconi's television empire begins from the idea that the main three RAI channels, which were rather biased according to him, before the '90s were giving most coverage to the winning dominant parties and represented a very sectorial point of view of the reality. With the deregulation of the regional televisions, Berlusconi started a business plan that aimed at buying from little private provincial owners their shares of local channels. Doing so, piece after piece, channel after channel, he arrived at the point in which he was owning broadcasted television channels in several Italian regions. The great idea of Berlusconi was to launch the same programs at the same time in all these different local channels, creating a sort of nation-spread local television, factually attacking the monopoly of the national television (RAI).

Usage of media

Television is among mass media the fastest and easiest way to convey a message. It is also one of the most spread good in the Italy of the late '80s, and became a great source of information for many citizens. It is natural to think, after personalities like Charles De Gaulle, that politics would have entered massively into television media. Berlusconi was a visionary in this sense. He foresaw and understood very well what the potential of this instrument, since he was a major part of his economic assets. He realized that the greatest opportunity that television could give him was the possibility to make people believe in him. Berlusconi had, as mentioned before, two major qualities: first, he knew how to talk and be appealing to the people; second, he was the 'new man'. He used the golden rules of leadership and applied them to nationwide channels, broadcasting them in TV. He also knew what people wanted to hear, and owning and working with media, he knew what media wanted to hear to accentuate him as a candidate. "Berlusconi understands [at that time], better than his competitors do, that the new competitive logic of mass media requires a high level of dramatization and personalization when it comes to political communication."¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Bondebjerg, Ib, and Peter Madsen. *Media, Democracy and European Culture*. Bristol: Intellect Ltd, 2008, p. 112.

In this context he became a masterpiece of personalization, somehow using the media and their inability to cope with such personalities. His famous 9 minutes message to the nation that launch his candidacy was, as mentioned, well thought in terms of the message he wanted to convey. Alongside to the content itself, the tone he used was voluntarily dramatizing to create suspense and uncertainty. It was well studied and specifically thought to be conveyed via television: the picture of his family, to appeal to family men and women, the 'home' environment, to give a sense of security and normality, the crucifix, touching Catholics and the church. All these details were part of a communication strategy meant to impress the average citizen through the use of television. As mentioned, the national public television (RAI) was at that time thought to be ideologically closer to the communists/socialists. Contrary to what one could expect, the 9-minute message was reported integrally not only in the TVs of Berlusconi (for obvious reasons) but also by RAI 3, and extensively reported by both RAI 1 and RAI 2. This shows rather clearly how little the people in charge of selecting what to broadcast in RAI understood of what great potential television hold: they pretty much helped and welcomed with open arms the raise of Silvio Berlusconi.

Importance of polls

Another important aspect that falls into Media coverage is the polling industry. Political polls have the great responsibility of analyzing and surveying the situation before the elections. Since the early 1930s, political surveys are the instruments that help politicians construct their electoral campaigns. These are the instruments that allow campaigns to focus on specific sectors of the society, those in which a certain candidate is weaker, in order to raise the chances of gaining their votes. Political polls do not only help campaign managers to shape targeted campaign objectives. It is not a mystery that some undecided citizens rely on surveys when making up their minds, and tend to vote for the top choices in the polls. This is the natural outcome of several psychological processes, as most of the 'non-politicized' citizens want to see their vote valued, and voting for parties that do not poll well is perceived as wasting the vote. Silvio Berlusconi understood well this cognitive process of opinion formation process.

During the 1994 electoral campaign, Berlusconi decided to leave nothing to its fate. He is the cofounder of Diakron, a company performing polls, which resulted as a fundamental aid for Forza Italia's victory. Berlusconi puts to its board managers from Fininvest, with the specific aim of survey and helping the campaign. If, on one side, some reported the unreliability of polls conducted on the owner of the poll itself, the silent majority of the people took them as

statistically reliable.¹²⁹ Berlusconi saw in the polling industry an incredible opportunity to develop surveys and work with their results. Since the market of politics was completely restated and it was important that people were the ones having a say in politics. Berlusconi's intuition pushed him to establish Diakron, with Gianni Pino, the marketing manager of Fininvest, in the head of this organization.

Following marketing's rules, especially Newman's last P – polling, Berlusconi used Diakron to run the process of segmentation, targeting and positioning. Diakron's main functions were to find the right market needs, through surveys, to position in the proper way the new political party. Once the electorate was determined, the agency needed to keep the party updated on social trends through focus groups and phone surveys. Another important function of this organization was to get media's and people's attention by showcasing the poll results. These above mentioned, would lead to structure Berlusconi's speeches and to favor his candidacy as a prime minister. Through the surveys Berlusconi is able to build his image aligning with the audience's demands.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Dipollina, Antonio. "MA SE QUELLI SONO SONDAGGI." La Repubblica. Accessed December 07, 2017. <http://ricerca.repubblica.it/repubblica/archivio/repubblica/1994/02/10/ma-se-quelli-sono-sondaggi.html>.

¹³⁰ Ignazi P. *Vent'anni dopo Forza Italia, la parabola del berlusconismo*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2014.

5. Drawing a parallel with Donald Trump's 2016 presidential elections communication strategy

Silvio Berlusconi, as discussed so far in this thesis, is certainly the initiator of a complete new method of communication in politics (in Europe). It was reported several times and shown with the help of numerous examples how his figure has completely changed the political panorama, not only in Italy, but in the entire world. In the introduction, I claimed that even nowadays, after almost 25 years since his first appearance, Berlusconi's methods are still studied and looked up as a winning methodology, much that we can talk about *Berlusconism*¹³¹¹³², as a way of conducting electoral campaign. If it is true he is one of the major exponents of this new tactic of campaigning, he is certainly not the only one. In the very recent history, another figure accounting several similarities with S. Berlusconi has arisen, and became the 45th president of the United States of America, Donald J. Trump. In light of the findings that arose in the course of the research here presented, the aim of this last section is to analyze the features mentioned above that are common to the figures of Silvio Berlusconi and Donald Trump.

5.1. Politicians as brands: Donald Trump and Berlusconi's bun in the hat

The first thing that one immediately realizes, when reading the biography of Donald Trump, is that he shares the 'background' with Berlusconi. Trump was born roughly in the same period of Berlusconi, and saw the radical changes that came just after the end of the second World War, which in politics were radical. The fear of new extremisms spread worldwide, after the experiences that lead to hard dictatorships in Italy (Mussolini's Fascism) and Germany (Hitler's Nazism). These two experiences made the average common man to be much more inclined to be a moderate in political choices, and both Berlusconi and Trump (to some extent) played on this surface for long time. The age similarity between the two cases taken into consideration would not be much of an indicator testing the hypothesis that both of them had successful campaign because they have ridden the same horses. However, the fact that they had a first-hand experience of the changes that happened during the cold war helped them understand the

¹³¹ A different kind of Berlusconism then the one described in the chapter 3.2.

¹³² Floriano De Angeli in "L'Europeo", n. 49, 1993

average elector, that person that actually elected them in office. A very important consideration to make is that neither of the two characters was a politician by profession, first indicator as mentioned in chapter 2.1. To make the reader understand better why is Trump a great example or a successful brand, beside the fact he became a US president, I will explain his case on Needham's criteria for successful brands (from the chapter 2.1.)

Table 6: Trump as a brand

Brands act as simplifiers to make it easy for voters to understand what is being offered.	The Trump brand, even though not taken very seriously in the beginning of his presidential candidacy, became one of the clearest brands in the US presidential elections.
Brands are unique and clearly differentiated from the competition.	Trump was unique, an underdog, a businessman, who had nothing to do with politics beside being a donor for both the Republican and Democratic Parties.
Brands are reassuring so voting for them is not risky.	Becoming the Republican's nominee made people believe, Trump could actually win the elections.
Brands are aspirational and convey a positive vision for a better way of life.	The brand of Trump stood for no corruption, transparency and he was giving the ordinary American people a promise of a life in America with only Americans.
Brands symbolize better internal values of the product or organization.	Trump had many supporters, his friends and connections, his associates, but especially volunteers. Many Republican people stood by him and he had a very strong volunteering structure.

Source: Adapted from Needham, Catherine. "Brands and political loyalty." *Journal of Brand Management* 13, no. 3 (2006): 179-181. doi:10.1057/palgrave.bm.2540260 in Lees-Marshment, Jennifer. *Political Marketing: Principles and Applications*. New York: Routledge 2014, p.105.

They both joined the electoral arena because ‘their country needed them.’¹³³¹³⁴ Donald Trump, coming from a rather rich family, for most of his life had the only aspiration of becoming richer and richer, and expand his great empire over the borders. As a matter of fact, his real estate empire first, the casino industry later and many other businesses made him one of the most powerful businessman in the country. As Berlusconi, later on, he will use massively not only his own money, but also his influence and connections to shape the scenario to his advantage. Berlusconi used as mentioned in chapter 3.2. and 4.3. his connections with Bettino Craxi, but also his colleagues from Fininvest to put them in charge of his campaign. Trump also used his friends, like Roger Stone, Katrina Pierson, Steve Bannon or his daughter Ivanka Trump, to help him campaign. Not being politicians, allowed both of them to run for office as pure newcomers into a rigged system, ruled by the ‘dirty’ and corrupt political elites that reduced the countries into misery. Vital for their campaign is the fact that they have been seen as saviors of the land, patriots that have no other interests than saving their countries. As being already rich, takes away the lucrative aspect of the dirty politician. This is a key aspect to take into consideration; in years in which the wind of populism is widely spreading all over western countries, being different is an added value and easily translates into votes, especially coming from the ‘silent majority’ that did not vote for traditional parties/leaders in the previous elections. This is certainly one amongst the reasons why Forza Italia/Berlusconi won in 1994 as well as Trump gained the Republican nomination first, and the elections, later on (2016).

Being business people, the both of them, was a key factor to shaping their political strategies. They understand management of politics, they treat the political scenario with a business approach and the party as a company and they perceive themselves as brands (chapter 2.1. and 4.1.). If this is clear in Berlusconi’s approach toward Forza Italia, Trump’s case is rather more complicated. The Italian political environment in the early ‘90s, despite of the changes in the electoral law that was forcing more than ever to a majoritarian system, remained a strong fragmented multi-party system. In this scenario, taken into account all the different socio-economic factors (as mentioned in chapter 3) that lead to this decision, Berlusconi saw a void in the moderate-right area of the political spectrum and decided to fill the gap with his

¹³³ "L'Italia il paese che amo" La discesa in campo sul video." La Repubblica. Accessed December 02, 2017. <http://www.repubblica.it/2004/a/sezioni/politica/festaforza/discesa/discesa.html>. "I decided to ‘enter the field’ to take care of the public matter because I do not want to live in an illiberal country... and now I ask you to enter the field, asking all of you - now, immediately, before it is too late..."

¹³⁴ "Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech." Time. Accessed December 02, 2017. <http://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/>. "Our country is in serious trouble. We don't have victories anymore. We used to have victories, but we don't have them."

newborn party/company, Forza Italia. In a pure majoritarian system, as proper of the United States, Donald Trump situation was radically different, but his approach was very similar. His figure has always been very much involved into the ‘hidden’ politics, being a massive donor for both the major parties (Democratic and Republican), and sometimes even participating, even though not as person in the front, in lobbying activities both during campaigns and policy decision making processes. It is not hard to sustain this thesis, just look at Trump’s relationship with Roger Stone and Paul Manafort¹³⁵, lobbyists since the early ‘70s that later on became both chief advisers to the Trump campaign in 2016. The interesting question, however, is how a well-known figure like Donald Trump, who had a strong relationship with both parties (radically different in ideology), was able to reinvent itself and enter politics as a ‘virgin’ candidate dedicated to the republican party, defeating ‘real republicans’ like Senator M. Rubio, Senator T. Cruz and even the son/brother of two republican ex-presidents, Senator Jeb Bush? The answer is in the title of this paragraph itself, he thought of himself as a brand, as a CEO of a company. In business, changing company is a natural behavior, especially in the case of personal growth interest. It is not perceived as a betrayal, and it is socially acceptable by the majority of people. Donald Trump was incredibly skilled in shaping people’s perception of himself, focusing the attention more on what he said, rather than on who he was. Politics as brand factor is without doubts a characteristic that differentiate both Berlusconi and Trump in the eyes of the voters in relations to the rest of the choices (traditional parties/establishment candidates) and played an important role in their campaigns.

5.2. The Media industry, a double edge sword

One of the very important aspects that played a major role in several of the campaigns of Silvio Berlusconi was his relationship with the media, which, as we saw in chapter 4.3, he partially owned (Mediaset) and partially despised (Rai). An interesting parallel can be drawn on Trump and his behavior towards media and their industries (polls, surveys, debates etc.). This is an aspect that would deserve a long discussion, but due to controlled space, some information will be just mentioned and redirected to proper bibliography for consultation. Donald J. Trump was never really taken seriously by anyone, especially the media, until the day after the elections. This is partially because of his way of approaching politics and partially because no one in the

¹³⁵ *Get Me Roger Stone*. Directed by Dylan Bank, Daniel DiMauro, and Morgan Pehme. Performed by Roger Stone. USA: Netflix, 2017.

survey industry saw his candidacy as a real threat to his opponent, Hillary Clinton. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the most even survey the week before the elections was done by Nate Silver, from the FiveThirtyEight, which saw Trump chances of winning at less than 30% on a nationwide sample.¹³⁶ The aspect on which I would like to focus my attention is the fact that, despite of being never taken seriously for more than a year (starting with the primary season in early 2015, and the electoral campaign, later on), he was always ready to dodge the bullet, claiming that the media as a whole, and the poll industry especially, were rigged and bought by ‘crooked Hillary’ and biased toward the democratic party. This created a whole new narration, a parallel reality in which many people started to believe, where Trump was the stand-alone man against a complete failing corrupt system. This ability of The Donald, however, was years earlier largely adopted by Silvio Berlusconi, when he claimed that the ‘corrupt communist juridical system’¹³⁷ was sectorial and party biased against him. In the eyes of a lower-educated, white, religious republican (typical voter of the Trump campaign) this way of standing up against the biased, philanthropic radical chic media industry lead to the perception that later on, Trump would have stood up for the rights of the lower classes. The parallel is clear: in the Italy post-Tangentopoli (hitting massively the socialist parties on the left side), Silvio Berlusconi greatly surfed the anti-communist wave that won the votes of the moderate catholic middle-class citizens of rural Italian areas, redeeming Italy from a political class of corrupted and inefficient personalities that lead to the critical situation of those years.

5.3. Language and message, the communication of two winners

The 2016 US elections were the elections in the American history with the toughest tactics you can take, also called the “low road” in American politics¹³⁸. Very little people would disagree that the major responsible for this climate was Donald J. Trump. The language he used, oftentimes above the line, his charisma, the way he conveyed the message: these factors were all part of his communication, and I would go that far claiming that they were part of a well thought strategy, in order to shock and distract the attention from other aspects of Donald Trump

¹³⁶ Silver, Nate. "2016 Election Forecast." FiveThirtyEight. November 08, 2016. Accessed December 05, 2017. <https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2016-election-forecast/>.

¹³⁷ From Berlusconi's first speech (attachment 1)

¹³⁸ Jane Mayer in *Get Me Roger Stone*. Directed by Dylan Bank, Daniel DiMauro, and Morgan Pehme. Performed by Roger Stone. USA: Netflix, 2017.

that would have hurt him. “There is only one thing in life worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.” (Oscar Wilde - Roger Stone)¹³⁹ this is the mantra that Trump followed day and night.

Silvio Berlusconi, some would say, was more cautious in this sense. Even though this might be true to some extent, I would attribute this feeling to the fact that the American campaign system is much more sensationalistic than the Italian one. Nevertheless, Berlusconi was and is, during his entire political career, one of the figure that was attributed the highest amount of scandals.

From the point of view of the content, the styles of the two men are rather different, but several similarities can be found in the way they expressed themselves during their electoral campaigns. As mentioned in the theoretical and in the previous analytical chapters, the message is as important as the style of conveying the message itself. This means that no matter how good what you say is, if you do not deliver it correctly it will not have the impact desired. Both Trump and Berlusconi understood this key fact of effective communication majestically. Roger Stone, Trump’s close friend of many years and later his advisor, was one of the first to see in the current US president someone that could run and achieve the highest possible office in the US.¹⁴⁰ Stone is acknowledged by many as one of the reckless people in the recent American political history, namely in the way he run campaigns. His ability to play dirty, with the mantra of ‘winning, no matter how’ surely inspired Trump, who embraced it fully and is one of the factors that led him to victory.

Both figures in our analysis were able to abandon the so-called politically correct, and raised the bar of political message to a total new level. Berlusconi did so with his humor, oftentimes out of line and rather sexist, but it strongly related to the society (the Italian one) that was still very patriarchal and in which a rather little percentage of the offices were occupied by women. Trump did so in many different ways, the most redundant of which related to the Muslim community, defined as terrorist and enable of all evil in America.

A populist reader could claim that the underlying motivation of all politicians is not determined by the ideology they feel closer to, but by their need to win and remain in office. In this sense, electoral promises are oftentimes what constitute the electoral program of the candidates, and the ability of a politician relies in how well he is able to make this promises trustworthy. I will

¹³⁹ *Get Me Roger Stone*. Directed by Dylan Bank, Daniel DiMauro, and Morgan Pehme. Performed by Roger Stone. USA: Netflix, 2017.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibidem*

not discuss upon whether this is morally correct or not; what is interesting in terms of this analysis is the fact that both Berlusconi and Trump made of promises a vast majority of their campaigns. The incredible parallel is that they made promises that were clearly shoots for the moon, things that hardly could have ever materialized. Donald Trump's wall at the border with Mexico¹⁴¹, Berlusconi's raise of minimum wage/pension to higher standards¹⁴², Trump's complete shutdown and ban of Muslim. All these are just a little taste of their electoral promises. Despite of how astonishing what they said was, their great ability was to play with the fear (or dreams) of the voters, to talk to their hearths more than to their brains. On one side, this approach radicalizes more and more the voters, it sets a clear distinction between those who vote for either of them, and those who don't; it loses part of those moderate voters that would be called policy-voters. On the other side, it gives a sense of identity to voters that come from many different social extractions, it keeps together socialists and liberals in the case of Berlusconi, it erases the tensions between moderate pro-choice and radical republicans in the case of Trump. It forms a solid base, that surely is not ideologically strong, but follows the leader no matter what.

In conclusion, we can consider the experiences of Trump and Berlusconi quite similar for many reasons. Both of them were incredible fighters and played more in attack than in defense ('Lock her up' Trump on Hillary Clinton). Both of them, on one side were able to gain the votes of those outsiders of politics, annoyed by the establishments (Prima Repubblica, Berlusconi; Establishment, Trump). Both of them were using high tones to shock people, and promised more and more to expand their consensus (Berlusconi's promises). Both had little boundaries, and hardly retained themselves from mocking anyone who would cross their path. Both of them on the other side created their solid base playing with fear and identifying a common enemy (Muslims, Communists). Both of them were able to quickly recover from scandals (Ruby Rubacuori, sex scandals on Berlusconi). Lastly, both of them proved their strategies were incredibly successful. Strategies, where they made themselves the key player, the leader, **the brand**; using a specific kind of **language**, and relying of the **media** to deliver both the brand and the message he needs to convey.

¹⁴¹ "Donald Trump's Presidential Announcement Speech." Time. Accessed December 02, 2017. <http://time.com/3923128/donald-trump-announcement-speech/>.

¹⁴² Vespa, Bruno, and Silvio Berlusconi. "Berlusconi da Vespa - Il contratto con gli italiani." Repubblica Tv. Accessed December 06, 2017. <http://video.repubblica.it/politica/berlusconi-da-vespa-il-contratto-con-gli-italiani/83080/81470>.

Conclusion

After over 60 pages of analysis, it might seem an unnecessary repetition to claim that Silvio Berlusconi has changed forever the way politics was intended, but it is not. It is really not. The process started by this figure in the Italy of the early '90s it is something that had and still has repercussions all around the world. Not only he became the iconic image of a country, but also, he became the symbol of a trend, of a way of doing politics that many emulated in the course of the recent history, from Donald Trump to Andrej Babiš. I believe, after the Berlusconi's case analysis, that one of the major reasons why he became this, and a lot more, has to deal with the fact that he applied the techniques of political marketing into his communication style for the first time in the Italian history.

This whole analysis has dealt with the underlying always-important debate of what makes a successful political strategy. I am not sure if Silvio Berlusconi asked himself this question, but certainly he found the answer. The research question investigated the main factors of success of Berlusconi's political communication within the framework of political marketing. Thanks to this analysis, we can confidentially say that Berlusconi benefitted from political marketing and won also because of his innovative approach. Silvio Berlusconi was successful because he 'treated' politics with a marketing approach. Clearly, as reported several times in the course of the thesis, his victories need to be put into context, and other major factors had a large impact in the course of history. Firstly, the socio-economic situation of the early '90s was profitable for a politician with attentive eyes. After an incredible shake of the system, given by 'Tangentopoli' and the following judiciary witches hunt 'Mani Pulite', the landscape was fertile for what came a couple of years after, the raise of a 'homo novus', a hero that sensationally could have saved the country. Traditional (and historical) parties like the Democrazia Cristiana and the Partito Socialista Italiano, parties that had ruled the *First Republic* for years and years, parties with exponents of the caliber of Aldo Moro, Nenni, were forced to either die or reinvent themselves, and lately made the way for the newcomer Forza Italia. Surely as well, alongside to these socio-economic component of Berlusconi's victory, a constitutional change in the electoral law played a role to a certain extent in his victory, with the new *Legge Mattarella (mixed half-majoritarian)*.

Alongside to all these other factors, what interested me was the idea of testing the hypothesis, above mentioned, that his success was the result of a marketing strategy. In order to do so, I introduced three key factors, three indicators, which could explain and result in

a winning communication strategy. I then reported the existing theoretical framework behind these three indicators and analyzed the use that Berlusconi did of them. The results of my research are rather interesting, considering that major sectors of his political strategy made use of these three factors.

Silvio Berlusconi was very prepared for his new role as an Italian politician. He created a party, where most of the members were businessmen, entrepreneurs or at least somehow connected to the business world. Being very careful about who he would chose to collaborate with, his own advertisement agency chose the party members. He also established a new organization for political surveys. Through that he could easily get closer to people and understand what they want and what they need. The party, and all its associated organizations were led by Fininvest's head managers, therefore it was clear why his strategies based on marketing and management platforms.

Forza Italia, the party that he built in a system crisis period of the country has signs of a Market Oriented Party (one of the three Lees-Marshment types of parties). Lees-Marshment explains, that this party is the most modern and the youngest type of a party and it is trying to understand what does the voter's demand, so that the party could satisfy that. Berlusconi used a lot his instincts, but he also run several surveys (through his Diakron polling organization). This party conducts market intelligence to find voters' needs and then based on that design the product, which Berlusconi partly did. Although the product in this case, as several times mentioned, is the leader of the party, he definitely designed the message that was being delivered. Another deviation from the MOP party, is that Forza Italia, firstly was not intended as long-term accomplishment party (even though Forza Italia, in 2017, still exists).

I applied Berlusconi's political case on the Newman model of political marketing and it seems Berlusconi followed the Newman model, using the "4P" components quite literally. The 4P's are the product, push marketing, pull marketing and polling. Product in Berlusconi's persona, his leadership image and the 'good' that he brings along with himself. Push marketing is the platform how the message is going to be communicated, though in our case, it could be the message itself, transmitted by the product to the citizens. Pull marketing focuses on mass media, Berlusconi relied a lot on his own media empire, but also tried to make all the networks interested in him, and he very much succeeded; and the last P which stands for polling. That was the established Diakron organization which had an impact in shaping his message and the whole communication strategy. From this paragraph it is clearly seen that the three chosen

indicators which were analyzed in the 4th chapter come along by themselves; brand (the product), message (push marketing) and media with the polls (pull marketing and polling).

Segmentation was one of the key marketing tools to help Berlusconi build the right strategy for his first campaign. The segmentation criteria in Italy had different meanings from other European countries: the geographical segmentation was important because of the differences between the North and the South, not just cities or small villages; the religious criteria had to be incorporated because of the Catholic majority of Italy; demographical criteria divided the electors into several groups, just like it would divide the Mediaset audience (family men, women and older generations); and the criteria of sympathy towards Berlusconi, since he was already kind of a celebrity. Consequently, targeting chosen segments and positioning himself in certain ways; he based his political alliances on territory. Making two different coalitions and putting these into one block with him as a leader. He also incorporated a lot of metaphors and language from various spheres like religion or football, which helped him get the support from different social environments.

Taking the chosen indicators, this thesis explains what are the main factors of success of Berlusconi's political communication and therefore if he benefited from political marketing. The part of Berlusconi putting himself out there as an ordinary man, had an instant effect on all the rest of his campaign. He used his knowledge from his experience with his successful companies and the first thing he did is use his name a *brand*. He was already known, he owned three popular TV channels, he owned a beloved football club AC Milan, he was a wealthy businessman. Therefore, making a name in politics was very easy. Additionally, he was a highly charismatic person and a natural leader, therefore he was admired, respected and very much liked. The fact, that we are talking about a massive political marketing revolution and the massive use of personalization, when we are talking about Berlusconi is very connected to the phenomenon of television. This is the period where TV is becoming a very important participant in politics. Therefore, we are also talking about the Americanization of Italian politics. Personalization is tied to the image of a leader, and Berlusconi was able to deliver himself to the people as a leader who will bring back the Italian miracle. His situation, as the owner of several TV channels, made it easy for him to be seen, and recognized, but it needs to be said that it was not only his channels who talked about Berlusconi. Berlusconi's personalization of politics had an impact on the next generation of politics, in Italy and elsewhere. The second chosen indicator is the *language*. The style of Berlusconi's language can be very well seen in his first speech which made to enter the world of politics. Always staying the charismatic person

who he is, he used different metaphors, slogans, populist phrases, but most importantly a clear message that people would easily understand. He was an innovator of the language of the Second Republic. After the traditional parties disappeared, and the political system changed; and because Berlusconi knew (because of his surveys) what people wanted, he started to use a completely new political language. His achievements can be also given to the populist approach he used in his way of communicating. Drawing an enemy, the communism, he could target the corrupt system and make people believe that Forza Italia is the needed change that must happen. Additionally, the figure of the leader itself is a very specific element of populism and since he established his leadership in TV, Berlusconi was called a telepopulist. As already mentioned, Berlusconi was in possession of several television stations (in Italy and Europe), with that he was able to manage the process of his personalization, being the owner shaped a lot his position and helped his campaign win the votes that he got. Even before he ran for prime minister and even formed Forza Italia, he foresaw how television could be a part of politics, helping his friend, the already mentioned, Bettino Craxi. His organization Publitalia made political spots, advertisements, and then broadcasted them in the Mediaset channels. Therefore, once running himself, he knew how to use the media to fabricate his victory. He also used polls to help him understand the topics people were interested in and then to get the attention of all the other media. Berlusconi won because he was able, through professionalized skills, to make use of the opportunities offered by the new mass media system.

To sustain the three chosen indicators, this work looked at the Trump's 2016 presidential election to find several similarities with Berlusconi's case. These two political personalities, who are coming from different continents and enter in politics in different moments, share a lot of insight, and was found that use the political marketing in similar ways. Both of them proved their strategies were incredibly successful. The strategies in using very strong personalization techniques, and using their knowledge of marketing branding from their non-political empires. Both of them used their connections (both political and non-political) to help them make an unforgettable strategy, switching from a business world to a political one. They were the heroes who would change the corrupted system and therefore became leaders of an extremely large community, who followed them and voted for them. Berlusconi's way of creating a party way understandable, putting it into context of what was happening in the country, in Trump's case it was a little more complicated, but the way of approaching it was very similar: the country was corrupt, and he could not let the 'crooked Hillary' win. Consequently, these two personalities share a similar way of playing with language. Both of them, used the message they

were delivering as a main part of their strategy. We can observe that Berlusconi was more of a political player than Trump, since Berlusconi's language was more politically evolved, and he was an innovator, whom other politicians followed, even in today's politics. Trumps language, on the other hand, will never be forgotten, but I would be shocked if any politician would use the strong aggressive techniques as he did. Anyhow, in their message, they both referred to this kind of miracle: Berlusconi bringing back the '60s boom when Italian economy was at its top and Trump 'making America great again'. We could also talk about the way there were rather scandalous, a lot of times over the line. As for their differences, Berlusconi mostly relied on his instincts and his charisma; Trump, on the other hand, surrounded himself with political and communication advisors, who helped shape his language and communication style. Never the less, they both used a lot of humor in their language, and going back to populism, they made a lot of over the top promises, which were (and still are) very hard to keep. The last indicator used in this thesis was the usage of media. Both, already knowing what being mediatized means, had no problems suddenly being in the center of attention; and they obviously knew how media would react to a celebrity outsider, such a politician would always become a phenomenon. In both cases, the scene became so spectacularized. Also, they both used polls to their advantage, even though in different ways; Trump used scandals and dirt on his opponents and then just waited what would happen to the poll results and Berlusconi used to get closer to the voters and understand what does he need to do to win.

The aim of this thesis was to analyze and investigate how did Berlusconi used political marketing and how did he make of his political strategy a proven success, that social scientists want to style study his style of doing politics. Firstly, I will mention the secondary question 'Was Silvio Berlusconi successful because he introduced a marketing approach in his political communication behavior?' After the research, analysis and the conclusion, I am positive, that political marketing was a great factor in the way of Berlusconi's campaigning and style of politics. Because of the marketing approach, he was able to develop a campaign never seen before in Italy. The main research question was 'What are the components of a successful communication strategy (in the case of Silvio Berlusconi)?' Analyzing what political marketing is, what are the elements used in political marketing, a successful communication strategy (or campaign strategy), following the Newman's model, are branding in politics, the right political language and communication delivery style, and the accurate usage of media (and polls). Berlusconi made great use of these components, which then led to win the prime minister seat, not one time, but three times, and making him the longest ruling prime minister in modern Italy.

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Attachments

Berlusconi's entrance speech – Attachment 1

"L'Italia è il Paese che amo. Qui ho le mie radici, le mie speranze, i miei orizzonti. Qui ho imparato, da mio padre e dalla vita, il mio mestiere di imprenditore. Qui ho appreso la passione per la libertà.

Italy is the country I love. Here I have my roots, my hopes, my horizons. Here I learned, from my father and from life, my job as an entrepreneur. Here I learned the passion for freedom.

Ho scelto di scendere in campo e di occuparmi della cosa pubblica perché non voglio vivere in un Paese illiberale, governato da forze immature e da uomini legati a doppio filo a un passato politicamente ed economicamente fallimentare.

I decided to enter the field to take care of the public affairs because I don't want to live in an illiberal country, governed by immature forces and men tied to a politically and economically failing past.

Per poter compiere questa nuova scelta di vita, ho rassegnato oggi stesso le mie dimissioni da ogni carica sociale nel gruppo che ho fondato. Rinuncio dunque al mio ruolo di editore e di imprenditore per mettere la mia esperienza e tutto il mio impegno a disposizione di una battaglia in cui credo con assoluta convinzione e con la più grande fermezza.

In order to fulfill this new life choice, I handled today my resignation from every social position in the group I founded. I therefore renounce to my role as editor and entrepreneur to put my experience and all my efforts at the disposal of a battle in which I believe with absolute conviction and with the greatest firmness.

So quel che non voglio e, insieme con i molti italiani che mi hanno dato la loro fiducia in tutti questi anni, so anche quel che voglio. E ho anche la ragionevole speranza di riuscire a realizzarlo, in sincera e leale alleanza con tutte le forze liberali e democratiche che sentono il dovere civile di offrire al Paese una alternativa credibile al governo delle sinistre e dei

I know what I do not want, and together with the many Italians who have put their trust in me all these years, I also know what I want. And I also have the reasonable hope of succeeding in realizing it, in a sincere and loyal alliance with all the liberal and democratic forces that feel the civil duty to offer the country a credible alternative to the government of the left and the communists.

comunisti.

La vecchia classe politica italiana è stata travolta dai fatti e superata dai tempi.

L'autoaffondamento dei vecchi governanti, schiacciati dal peso del debito pubblico e dal sistema di finanziamento illegale dei partiti, lascia il Paese impreparato e incerto nel momento difficile del rinnovamento e del passaggio a una nuova Repubblica. Mai come in questo momento l'Italia, che giustamente diffida di profeti e salvatori, ha bisogno di persone con la testa sulle spalle e di esperienza consolidata, creative ed innovative, capaci di darle una mano, di far funzionare lo Stato.

Il movimento referendario ha condotto alla scelta popolare di un nuovo sistema di elezione del Parlamento. Ma affinché il nuovo sistema funzioni, è indispensabile che al cartello delle sinistre si opponga, un polo delle libertà che sia capace di attrarre a sé il meglio di un Paese pulito, ragionevole, moderno.

Di questo polo delle libertà dovranno far parte tutte le forze che si richiamano ai principi fondamentali delle democrazie occidentali, a partire da quel mondo cattolico che ha generosamente contribuito all'ultimo cinquantennio della nostra storia unitaria. L'importante è saper proporre anche ai cittadini italiani gli stessi obiettivi e gli stessi valori che hanno fin qui consentito lo sviluppo delle libertà

The old Italian political class has been overwhelmed by the facts and overcome by the time. The self-sinking of the old rulers, crushed by the weight of the public debt and the system of illegal financing of the parties, leaves the country unprepared and uncertain in the difficult moment of the renewal and the transition to a new Republic. Never as in this moment, Italy, which rightfully distrusts prophets and saviors, needs people with their heads on their shoulders and consolidated experience, creative and innovative, able to give her a hand, to make the state work.

The referendum movement led to the popular choice of a new parliamentary election system. But in order for the new system to work, it is essential to have an opposition to the sinister cartel, a pole of freedom that is capable of attracting to itself the best of a clean, reasonable, modern country.

This pole of liberty must include all the forces that refer to the fundamental principles of Western democracies, starting from the Catholic world that has generously contributed to the last fifty years of our unitary history. The important thing is to know how to propose to Italian citizens the same objectives and values that so far have enabled the development of freedom in all the great Western democracies.

in tutte le grandi democrazie occidentali.

Quegli obiettivi e quei valori che invece non hanno mai trovato piena cittadinanza in nessuno dei Paesi governati dai vecchi apparati comunisti, per quanto riverniciati e riciclati. Né si vede come a questa regola elementare potrebbe fare eccezione proprio l'Italia. Gli orfani e i nostalgici del comunismo, infatti, non sono soltanto impreparati al governo del Paese. Portano con sé anche un retaggio ideologico che stride e fa a pugni con le esigenze di una amministrazione pubblica che voglia essere liberale in politica e liberista in economia.

Le nostre sinistre pretendono di essere cambiate. Dicono di essere diventate liberaldemocratiche. Ma non è vero. I loro uomini sono sempre gli stessi, la loro mentalità, la loro cultura, i loro più profondi convincimenti, i loro comportamenti sono rimasti gli stessi. Non credono nel mercato, non credono nell'iniziativa privata, non credono nel profitto, non credono nell'individuo. Non credono che il mondo possa migliorare attraverso l'apporto libero di tante persone tutte diverse l'una dall'altra. Non sono cambiati. Ascoltateli parlare, guardate i loro telegiornali pagati dallo Stato, leggete la loro stampa. Non credono più in niente. Vorrebbero trasformare il Paese in una piazza urlante, che grida, che inveisce, che condanna.

Per questo siamo costretti a contrapporci a loro. Perché noi crediamo nell'individuo, nella famiglia, nell'impresa, nella competizione, nello

Those goals and values that have never found full citizenship in any of the countries governed by the old communist apparatus, no matter how much repainted and recycled. Nor do we see how Italy could be an exception to this elementary rule. The orphans and the nostalgic ones of communism, in fact, are not only unprepared to govern the country. They also bring an ideological heritage that screeches and punches with the demands of a public administration that wants to be liberal in politics and liberal in economics.

Our left block pretends to have changed. They say they have become liberal democratic. But it's not true. Their men are always the same, their mentality, their culture, their deepest convictions, their behavior remained the same. They do not believe in the market, they do not believe in private initiative, they do not believe in profit, they do not believe in the individual. They do not believe that the world can improve through the free contribution of many people all different one from another. They have not changed. Listen to them talk, watch their news broadcasts paid by the state, read their press. They no longer believe in anything. They would like to turn the country into a screaming square, which screams, rants, and condemns.

This is why we are forced to oppose them. Because we believe in the individual, in the family, in the business, in competition, in

sviluppo, nell'efficienza, nel mercato libero e nella solidarietà, figlia della giustizia e della libertà.

development, in efficiency, in the free market and in solidarity, the daughter of justice and freedom.

Se ho deciso di scendere in campo con un nuovo movimento, e se ora chiedo di scendere in campo anche a voi, a tutti voi - ora, subito, prima che sia troppo tardi - è perché sogno, a occhi bene aperti, una società libera, di donne e di uomini, dove non ci sia la paura, dove al posto dell'invidia sociale e dell'odio di classe stiano la generosità, la dedizione, la solidarietà, l'amore per il lavoro, la tolleranza e il rispetto per la vita.

If I decided to enter the field with a new movement, and if I now ask also you to take the field, to all of you - now, immediately, before it's too late - it's because I dream, with open eyes, of a free society, of women and men, where there is no fear, where in place of social envy and class hatred are generosity, dedication, solidarity, love for work, tolerance and respect for the life.

Il movimento politico che vi propongo si chiama, non a caso, Forza Italia. Ciò che vogliamo farne è una libera organizzazione di elettrici e di elettori di tipo totalmente nuovo: non l'ennesimo partito o l'ennesima fazione che nascono per dividere, ma una forza che nasce invece con l'obiettivo opposto; quello di unire, per dare finalmente all'Italia una maggioranza e un governo all'altezza delle esigenze più profondamente sentite dalla gente comune.

The political movement that I propose to you is called, not randomly, Forza Italia. What we want to do with it is a free organization of totally new electric voters: not yet another party or another faction that are born to divide, but a force that arises instead with the opposite objective; to unite, to finally give Italy a majority and a government that meets the deepest needs felt by ordinary people.

Ciò che vogliamo offrire agli italiani è una forza politica fatta di uomini totalmente nuovi. Ciò che vogliamo offrire alla nazione è un programma di governo fatto solo di impegni concreti e comprensibili. Noi vogliamo rinnovare la società italiana, noi vogliamo dare sostegno e fiducia a chi crea occupazione e benessere, noi vogliamo accettare e vincere le grandi sfide produttive e tecnologiche dell'Europa e del mondo moderno. Noi vogliamo

What we want to offer Italians is a political force made up of totally new men. What we want to offer the nation is a government program made only of concrete and understandable commitments. We want to renew Italian society, we want to give support and confidence to those who create jobs and well-being, we want to accept and win the great productive and technological challenges of Europe and the modern world. We want to give

offrire spazio a chiunque ha voglia di fare e di costruire il proprio futuro, al Nord come al Sud vogliamo un governo e una maggioranza parlamentare che sappiano dare adeguata dignità al nucleo originario di ogni società, alla famiglia, che sappiano rispettare ogni fede e che suscitino ragionevoli speranze per chi è più debole, per chi cerca lavoro, per chi ha bisogno di cure, per chi, dopo una vita operosa, ha diritto di vivere in serenità. Un governo e una maggioranza che portino più attenzione e rispetto all'ambiente, che sappiano opporsi con la massima determinazione alla criminalità, alla corruzione, alla droga. Che sappiano garantire ai cittadini più sicurezza, più ordine e più efficienza.

La storia d'Italia è ad una svolta. Da imprenditore, da cittadino e ora da cittadino che scende in campo, senza nessuna timidezza ma con la determinazione e la serenità che la vita mi ha insegnato, vi dico che è possibile farla finita con una politica di chiacchiere incomprensibili, di stupide baruffe e di politica senza mestiere. Vi dico che è possibile realizzare insieme un grande sogno: quello di un'Italia più giusta, più generosa verso chi ha bisogno più prospera e serena più moderna ed efficiente protagonista in Europa e nel mondo.

Vi dico che possiamo, vi dico che dobbiamo costruire insieme per noi e per i nostri figli, un nuovo miracolo italiano."

space to anyone who wants to do and build their own future, in the North as in the South we want a government and a parliamentary majority that can give adequate dignity to the original nucleus of every society, to the family, that can respect every faith and that raise reasonable hopes for those who are weaker, for those looking for work, for those in need of care, for those who, after an active life, have the right to live in peace. A government and a majority that bring more attention and respect to the environment, that know how to oppose with the maximum determination to crime, corruption, drugs. Who know how to guarantee citizens more security, more order and more efficiency.

The history of Italy is at a turning point. As an entrepreneur, as a citizen and now as a citizen who is entering politics, without any shyness but with the determination and serenity that life has taught me, I tell you that it is possible to leave the incomprehensible chatter of a policy, the stupid quarrels and politics without a trade. I tell you that it is possible to realize together a great dream: that of a better Italy, more generous Italy towards those who needs it most, more prosperous and serene more modern and efficient protagonist in Europe and in the world.

I tell you that we can, I tell you that we must build together for ourselves and for our children, a new Italian miracle.